THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

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CUI BONO?

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

Why are the roses dead which twined
Around the rustic portico?
Their fragrance lives in memory yet,
Although they bloomed so long ago.
"Who can say, dear?"

Why did the rippling sunshine fade,
Which rested bright upon the wall?
It quivered there a little space—
Then died away, and that was all.
"Who can say, dear?"

The roses, love, will come again,
And far more fragrant will they seem!
Yes, sweet they'll bloom for you and me
In the next golden summer-dream.
"Even so, dear."

But time is fleet—shall you and I
Through all the years unchanged remain?
And will the years but sorrow bring,
But memories of some sweet old strain
Heard long ago?

ECO.

Ever My Queen.

BY PIERCE EGAN.

"AUTHOR OF THE FLOWER OF THE FLOCK," "VIOLET; OR, THE WONDER OF KINGSWOOD CHASE," "MARK JARRETT'S DAIRY," ETC.

CHAPTER III.

FOUND DROWNED.

It was only the work of a moment for the viscount to open the case and withdraw the pistols. Obstacles rarely stand in the way of those who recklessly determine on vengeance. As the sharp click of the bolt of the patent lock flying back struck his ear, he also caught the sound of a retreating footstep, and he feared that in the increasing darkness Cleveland Dysart intended to take flight, and so escape him.

He looked up quickly. The gloom had rapidly thickened; he could hardly distinguish the form which a minute previously had been only too distinct, and he cried out, sharply—

"Stand! You are not coward as well as villain?"

Cleveland strode up to him, and in a tone of rage, suppressed with difficulty, with which was mingled intense hate, he said—

"I am neither the one nor the other, as you shall know. You, man, bought with your mean gold, and with your unworthy and debasing machinations, the treasure which was the life of my life. Losing it, existence is a burden to me, and I intend to fling it away; but not until I have exacted some retribution. Unless my hand and eye fail me, my heart will not. I will take from you the price—poor and inadequate as it will be—of the gem of which you have robbed me—your life. The world *is* too small for you and me to co-exist in. If I leave this place to-night, it will be alone—"

"Alone!" sarcastically echoed the viscount, with a scornful laugh.

"Alone!" repeated Cleveland, sternly. "If you quit it a living, breathing man, I shall be ready for the mattock and spade."

"If my eye and hand fail *me* not—and I am in good practice, as I have already proved to-night—a grave in yonder ditch shall be your destiny a few minutes hence," responded the viscount, between his teeth. "Choose your pistol."

"Are they loaded?" demanded Cleveland, coldly and calmly.

Again the viscount laughed scornfully.

"I was honored with a perusal of your touching, begging, scoundrelly epistle to Lady Hastingleigh previous to my appearance here," he answered, contemptuously. "I, therefore, loaded the pistols myself before setting out on this pleasing errand. On your account, I took special care that each has its bullet, and will not miss fire. Choose!"

"Give me one—it is immaterial which," rejoined Cleveland, with the same impassible tone. "In this matter, at least, I do not suspect your truth."

He took one of the pistols at random, and carefully examined the nipple of the lock to see that it was capped, and tried the trigger by a backward and forward movement of his thumb, with the same coolness he would have displayed had he been about to shoot at a target for a wager.

Apparently satisfied, he demanded—

"How many paces?"

"Eight—turn and fire?" answered the viscount, promptly.

"Say five," returned Cleveland, with a sneer; "we may miss at eight."

"Eight is my distance," rejoined the viscount, with decision. "I kill at eight."

"And I at five, eight, twelve, or fourteen," exclaimed Cleveland, in a tone of indifference, which enraged the viscount. "However, eight be it, and may the Lord have mercy on your soul—I will not!" he added, in a low, deliberate, but terribly determined tone.

"I echo the sentiment, save that I substitute Satan," replied the viscount. "One!" he called, loudly, as he commenced to pace, "two—three!" he added, as he strode quickly away.

At the seventh pace he suddenly halted, and shouted, with shrill eagerness—

"Hold! I cannot see you!"

Heavy masses of black clouds were speeding over the opening at the top of the circle of trees, and gray moist vapor was rolling in the dell, and filling it as with a fog. Objects at a comparatively small distance were completely shut out from view, and the space which separated the viscount and Cleveland was sufficient to render each invisible to the other.

"I am here!" cried Cleveland, in a loud tone.

"I am here!" echoed the shrill yet sweet voice of a woman.

The sound was followed by an eldritch laugh.

THE VISCOUNT DISCARDS HIS DAUGHTER.

A sheet of blue lightning with startling suddenness lighted up the dell, and displayed every object within it with painful distinctness, and both Cleveland and the viscount saw a graceful, slim, girlish woman, whose every feature was clearly visible, standing only a few paces from them, clapping her hands.

Cleveland did not recognize her, but the viscount did, and he muttered—

"Death! Mad Lydia Marchmont!"

Then they were all enveloped in utter darkness, and a fearful crash of thunder stunned them, but not so completely as to prevent them hearing a wild, quivering, affrighted shriek from the poor mad creature, who had been standing near them, an intending spectator of the coming duel *à la mort*.

Then shouted Cleveland—

"We are far enough apart! Stand as we are! Fire at the next lightning-flash! We shall see each other plain enough then."

"Be it so!" cried the viscount, lustily.

But he took two short paces more, noiselessly, in order to bring him to his "killing" distance.

A hot, oppressive stillness ensued. Not a leaf rustled or a bough creaked. An intense darkness, which prevented the antagonists tracing the slightest outline of each other, prevailed, and in spite of the courage of both men the situation had something awful in it.

Yet at a moment came a blinding glare of lightning, and revealed the pale, desperate faces and the dark forms of the rivals as vividly as if they had been standing in bright, white sunlight.

A flash and a report from both pistols at the same instant ensued, and then silence.

This was shortly broken by a rushing noise, and a deluge of rain fell. For a lengthened period there was no other sound—nothing but the patter of heavy drops on the leaves of the trees and on the grassy dell. Not the flapping of a frightened night bird—not the stealthy fall of a retreating footstep.

The storm passed away, and bright, glistening, colorless moonbeams darted into the dell, making the turfy carpet look as if it had been suddenly tinged with a hoar frost.

They fell on the waters of the fountain, making them sparkle and glitter as if they were fashioned of burnished silver, and they fell on the stone seat on which the viscountess had beheld Cleveland sitting in pensive sadness when she entered the dell.

And they fell on the prone form of the Viscount Hastingleigh.

He lay stretched on his face, with his right hand extended, and still grasping his pistol.

He looked as though he were dead—as dead as if Cleveland's bullet had gone through his brain or his heart.

Yet, of a sudden, he moved, rolled over on his back, lay motionless there for a minute or more, until his eyelids unclosed, and his gaze rested on the soft, pallid blue sky, and the faint stars above him.

Slowly he raised himself to a sitting posture, pressed his temples with his hands, and peered round him.

He was alone.

He sprang to his feet, for he remembered all now. He passed his hands rapidly over his limbs to his smarting ear, and brought his hand away wet with ghastly blood.

"A mere scratch, though it stunned me," he murmured. "I am hit nowhere else; but I hit him—I hit him! I saw him spring into the air. He lies there somewhere. I cannot search for him. Let others find him."

He saw the dueling-case lying open not far from him, and he crept rather than walked to it. He placed his pistol within it, shut down the lid, locked it, and put it under his arm.

"I have closed my account with him," he said, grimly; "no, *for her*."

He glanced furtively for the opening out of the dell, and discovering it, he hurried toward it, without trusting himself to give a look right or left.

He gained the pathway leading down to the Stepping Stones, and descended it with rapidity. On reaching the brink of the river he was startled to see how the river had risen, and with what velocity it was rushing down the valley.

Especially at the Stepping Stones did it lash itself and break with fury, leaping up and washing over them, throwing spray right and left, and rendering what was not altogether a safe passage in the broad daylight a dangerous journey in the night time, moonlight though it was.

At this point he became conscious that he was drenched to the skin. He readily conjectured that torrents of rain had fallen during the time he had lain insensible in the dell, and, therefore, it was easy to account for the swollen state of the river.

He was too excited to heed this circumstance, and he sprang on to the Stepping Stones, leaping from one to the other with an agile step, until his foot, as he sprang on to a stone scarcely visible above the racing stream, gave a violent slip, and in an instant he found himself submerged in deep water, being borne rapidly into yet deeper flood.

He was, however, a good swimmer, and having escaped death from the bullet of Cleveland Dysart, he had no intention of surrendering his life in this fashion; so he promptly abandoned the dueling-case, allowing it to sink like a stone, while he struck out for the shore, and succeeded in landing at a shallow spot, where the river fringed his park.

Dripping like a Newfoundland dog, emerging from a flood in which he had been swimming for pastime, he hurried across the park, and cursed the moon for shining so brightly as to make him a distinctive object, to be marked down, intercepted, and seized, perhaps, by his own gamekeeper.

But he was not seen. He gained a private entrance into one of the wings of Hastingleigh Court, and entered it by the aid of a master-key, and made his way to one of his dressing-rooms pertaining to a suite he did not very frequently use.

There was a strange, painful stillness reigning in the house, as if every one in it were dead, and he turned up flights of stairs and along deserted corridors almost with a feeling of terror, but he met no one.

He gained the room to which he had been directing his steps, and rapidly changed his attire. When he had resumed his normal appearance he directed his steps to an apartment in which he knew he should find his valet awaiting him.

In this he was not disappointed, for he found him fast asleep in an easy-chair. He examined himself in a cheval-glass, and assured himself that he bore no trace of his conflict with Cleveland Dysart, or his battle with the flooded waters of the river.

Only his face was very white—deathly white and haggard, as if he had aged full ten years in those few hours.

With a smart slash on the valet's cheek with a light walking-cane which he carried—for he had donned hat, overcoat, and gloves, as if he had just returned from a visit—he made the man leap to his feet with a cry of pain, and a gesture as if he would hurl his smiter to the earth, but, on recognizing his master, he fell back with a mouth full of apologies for offering to resent an uncalled-for and cruel blow.

"Are the people who were here gone?" he asked.

"Yes, my lord," replied the man, venturing to apply his hand assuagingly to the thin red streak on his cheek.

"All?" he demanded, eagerly.

"All; every one, my lord," rejoined the man. "A few expressed some intention of staying to out in for a rubber—the Earl of Lucie, Lord Baggem, Sir Frederick Goldstone, Captain Carrington, and one or two more, my lord; but Lord Baggem suddenly proposed something which seemed to please the rest mightily, so they ordered their carriages and went away in a hurry."

The viscount mused a moment. Then he said, slowly, as he peered at him under his eyebrows—

"Lady Hastingleigh received in the concert-room, of course?"

The valet shook his head.

"I believe not, my lord," he replied.

"Why?" demanded the viscount, with uplifted eyebrows, as if it was an unheard-of slight to her guests.

"I do not know, my lord," he returned, with a peculiarly rigid arrangement of his features. "Her ladyship, I understand, did not appear at all after dinner."

"Understand? From whom, Lister?" he asked, a little quickly.

"Nurse Marchmont, my lord," replied the valet, glancing at him beneath his eyelashes with a sinister expression.

The viscount made no further remark, but proceeded, with the aid of Lister, to retire for the night.

But not to sleep. Heaven! what a horrid night he passed. His brain was racked, his ear beat and throbbed where it had been scored by the bullet. There was blood in his eyes, on his hands, and a vision present incessantly of a dead man lying stark in a lone place, beneath dark trees and darker brushwood.

Yet worse, for it agonized, enraged him, frenzied him, more than all else that had happpened. His overpowering belief that he had been dishonored by Lady Hastingleigh, tortured him beyond all powers of description. It is a strange curse upon those who love better than they love wisely, that they too readily convert a suspicion into a fact. The possibility that a wrong might have been committed has but too often been the ground-work of a conviction that it has been. In the jealousy which springs up in the brains of both sexes there is not a very wide difference; but men, who, of the two, have the least grounds for an unfavorable judgment, are the first to believe that the worst has taken place—that the maiden who is flighty necessarily falls; yet this is by no means the fact.

The viscount, however, was as certain that he had been deceived as if he was in possession of the most damning proofs.

"Did he not remind her of her vows of love to him—of her passionate—aye, her passionate caresses? Did he not write those words to her, and did she not, after she had received them, go to the meeting he made for her—to repeat them! No doubt to repeat them? Did I not with my own ears hear her assure him that she did not love me, and would not—pshaw! She has trampled on my coronet, and I will trail her in the dust, and—and—her brat? He is beyond further revenge. Let him lie where he is and rot. But for her—for her—"

How poor and inadequate all forms of retaliation that suggested themselves appeared to him.

It was rather late in the day before he attempted to proceed in any direction in which he would be likely to encounter Lady Hastingleigh; but though almost instinctively he avoided her apartments, the breakfast-room, the sitting and reception-rooms, in any one of which he might accidentally encounter her, she was constantly in his eyes, beautiful, but white, and garmented like an angel—no, a spectre!

He did not meet her—that he expected. He did not hear her name mentioned by one whom he encountered, or to whom he spoke, and the servants at Hastingleigh Court were numerous, and that, in some undefined way, disquieted him, for there appeared, he knew not exactly why, something ominous in the absence of all mention of her name.

He wandered about like a troubled spirit until he entered the nursery, all unwittingly, which contained his little daughter, lovely as child-form and nature, could, it seemed, possibly be.

It contained, too, Nurse Marchmont, who turned her sallow face and glittering eyes to him as he entered, and she smiled the moment she observed his wan features.

She advanced to him, but, at the same moment, the beautiful little child saw him, and springing to her feet, ran with outstretched arms toward him, uttering a cry of joy, and calling him her "Dear, dear, dear papa."

He recoiled from her as if she were a leper, and he cried as terrified people cry at sudden contact with one smitten with a foul disease.

"Take her away—take the cursed reptile away—fling her out of my sight, or I shall kill her with a blow!" he almost screeched.

The child looked up at him with her large, tender blue eyes, as he made a repulsing gesture to her, with amazement, and then, shrinking up to the nurse's side, hid her face in her dress and sobbed piteously.

"Do not speak so harshly, my lord, to the lovely little pet. She is afraid of your lordship's anger, and I am sure she is too great a treasure to you for you to think for a moment of giving her pain."

The viscount apostrophized the little trembling girl with an oath common on race grounds, but sadly out of place beneath that roof, and in the hearing of that pure, innocent child. Nurse Marchmont, with a scarcely concealed smile, responded—

"Oh, fie, my lord! I am sure you do not mean it;" and added, hastily, "Will your lordship please to tell me where to find my lady; I wish to consult with her concerning Lady Etheline here."

"I have not seen her," he returned, huskily. That was a falsehood—"I have not spoken with her since dinner yesterday"—that was truth. "Doubtless you will find her in her *boudoir*—possibly writing an answer to the letter she received yesterday."

He turned away, muttering the last words to himself rather than speaking them aloud.

"I have been to my lady's suite three or four times this morning," rejoined the nurse, looking steadfastly at him, with a penetration that was offensive to him, "but without seeing her. Indeed, my lord, I am afraid her ladyship's own maid has not seen her since she left the Court last night."

He started, a memory flashed through his brain.

"Ha!" he ejaculated; "by the way, Fairfield mentioned that she went away on a visit of consolation to—your sister."

He tried to laugh, but the smile was stifled in its birth, for it was met by a disturbing expression on Nurse Marchmont's face.

"My lady went from here on no such errand, my lord, and Heaven knows it," she returned, with an indignant sternness. "I think it will be quite as well if you let my poor sister's name rest unspoken. It is not for you to cast a gibe at her."

"I beg her pardon—I beg her pardon," he exclaimed, hastily; "I did not mean—"

"Let it go, my lord; it must be borne, I suppose, as other bitter trials have had to be borne," interposed the nurse. "But I am growing frightened at the absence of my lady. I saw her cross the Stepping Stones last night"

"You?" he interrupted, sharply.

"I told you so last night, my lord," she continued, quickly. "I saw her shadow as it flitted over the waters. I could not be mistaken in it. I do not think, from all I can learn, that her ladyship has returned since. There was an awful thunder and rain storm last night; I hope nothing serious has happened to my lady."

He remembered instantly his own passage over the Stepping Stones. In the uncertain light he had had a narrow escape, and they might have proved fatal to her.

"Great Heaven!" he thought, "if she has been drowned!"

He walked to the window to conceal the turbulence of his emotions.

"I shall be rid of both in that case," flashed through his mind, and he caught at the idea with avidity. He glanced at the little shrinking fairy, still clinging to the nurse's dress. "The rest will be easy enough," he muttered.

He returned to Marchmont, and was about to cast an unworthy reflection on the absence of the countess; but he checked himself—his breeding, at least, did that for him—and he said, in a quieter tone, but without deceiving her—

"I have no doubt that Lady Hastingleigh alarmed by the storm, sought shelter at Altrincham Park, which is not far from the Stepping Stones upon the opposite side. Her ladyship will be here in an hour or two, I have no doubt."

But she did not appear in an hour or two, or even that day or the next.

Nurse Marchmont, when she found that Lady Hastingleigh did not return home, was greatly exercised in her mind, and on the night of the second day she stood at her old post at the nursery window, watching as if she expected to see her ladyship, in the gloom of twilight, like a guilty spirit, stealing back to Hastingleigh Court; but she came not.

Nurse Marchmont gnawed her knuckles and her finger tips.

"What can have happened?" she mused, excitedly. "Something shocking, something dreadful, I am sure. The servants are whispering, and all sorts of rumors are beginning to circulate. I am sick at heart—so bitter sick—for I believe she is dead—drowned at the Stepping Stones—slipped in the darkness, and carried away to death. If she has been, *he* knows it, I am sure of that. Lord! Lord! what is coming? If Lyd—poor Lyd—were not crazed, she might yet be Lady Hastingleigh, for I am sure he is fond of her still, and we should know better how to manage him now. I will go to Lyd. A sudden shock sometimes brings mad people back to reason. It may be her—I'll try it—I know so well what to say to make her heart leap into her mouth. Ay, I'll *do* it!"

Whether she carried her project into execution she kept concealed within her own breast; but for several hours each day she absented herself from her duties at Hastingleigh Court, although, to do the woman justice, she devoted the rest of her time to the closest attention to her beautiful young charge, who so suddenly appeared to be abandoned by both parents.

A week elapsed—a long, horrible week—and no tidings of the viscountess were received. The viscount, strangely it seemed, kept himself confined to his own chamber, and, from what fell two or three times from the lips of the valet, each night drank to excess, so as to be placed insensible on his bed. Inquiries, however, were instituted in all directions for Lady Hastingleigh, but without avail.

On the following Sunday the viscount had risen late, after a midnight solitary debauch, and stood at his window with inflamed eyes and a racking brain, staring in the direction of the Stepping Stones.

Although he had but a hazy notion of the inanimate landscape, he tried to drown thought by gazing at the masses of foliage and long stretches of beautiful even greensward. Suddenly he became conscious that there was a moving mass of persons advancing from the neighborhood of the river toward the house, and that they appeared to march in a kind of slow and solemn procession.

What did it mean?

He felt a dull blow on his heart, and for a moment staggered back, for too busy surmises and visions rose up before his bloodshot eyes.

Had the body of Cleveland Dysart been unknelled, and were they bringing the corpse to the house to charge him with the murder?

He instantly resolved to take horse and flee away, he knew not where, and turning round beheld his valet standing in the doorway, with a grim, solemn, troubled countenance.

By an almost superhuman effort he controlled his terrible inward emotion, and assuming a cold, haughty, indignant air, he exclaimed—

"What is the meaning of that irruption of clodhoppers yonder? Why are they making for the house?"

"They—they—are the bearers of most mournful—most dreadful tiding," stammered the man, who looked exceedingly shocked.

The viscount involuntarily repeated the last three words.

"My lady—my poor lady!" ejaculated the valet, compressing his hands together, and bending his head down.

The viscount tried once, twice, thrice to speak, but the words died in his throat. He looked as if he were suffocating. At length, gripping Lister by the arm so tightly that the man winced with pain, he forced out, hoarsely—

"Tell me the worst at a word!"

"The viscountess, my lord, has been found—drowned in the Earl's Pool!" sibilated rather than spoke the man.

The viscount pressed his hands to his temples, gasped once or twice, and then fell back on the ground as if he had been smitten down with a club.

CHAPTER IV.

THE END OF THE BEGINNING.

Alas! it was but too true—the Viscountess Hastingleigh had been found drowned. Soon after the congregation had left the church on the opposite side of the river, a young farmer's laborer, betrothed to a dairymaid belonging to the viscount's household, was making his way toward the Stepping Stones, to enter the park, when on passing a stretch of deep water in the river, called the Earl's Pool, from the circumstance that, some hundred years or more back, tradition said, a young earl had there drowned himself for love, he observed something which instantly riveted his attention.

It was not the broad water-lilies, blooming so beautifully, like clusters of snow on the green-breasted leaves, nor the spike-shaped blossoms of the sedges, which attracted his eyes; but, to his fright, it was

an object that startlingly resembled a small, delicately-shaped alabaster hand—a woman's hand—it might have been a girl's, it was so diminutive and so exquisitely shaped.

A closer examination, and beneath the translucent water he saw a lady's countenance, paler than Parian marble—a woman's form, whose refined proportions could easily be traced beneath her garments, saturated and clinging to her limbs like cerements.

He knew that the Viscountess Hastingleigh was missing. He glanced at the drowned woman, not ten yards from the shore, and then he ran back to the church congregation, on the eve of separating, and shouted to them for help.

So the body was recovered and brought to the house, and laid in the chamber which had been occupied by Lady Hastingleigh previous to that terrible night on which she kept the appointment with Cleveland Dysart.

The viscount, on recovering from his swoon, refused to see the body. He shut himself up again in his own room, and forbade all access to him but through his steward and valet. He also issued the sternest injunctions that his daughter should not be permitted, under any circumstances, to see the body, or even to be told by Nurse Marchmont that "poor mamma had gone to heaven."

He refused to attend the coroner's inquest which was held, declaring that he had no evidence to tender, except that, on a certain night, he was told the viscountess had quitted Hastingleigh Court to visit an invalid, and he had neither seen nor heard of her since until now.

The coroner, out of respect to his apparently overwhelming grief, excused him. Nurse Marchmont recognized the body of her lady; so did Lister, the valet; so did Fairfield, her maid, and many of the domestics, male and female. At least, Fairfield was able to swear to the habiliments and to her jewelry; but having been some time in the water, the features were swollen and distorted, which gave them an altered appearance. Yet that it was the body of the Viscountess Hastingleigh there was no doubt.

Nor any doubt as to the manner of her death, for no one hinted at suicide; and when it was stated that she was known to have crossed the Stepping Stones on the night of the dreadful storm, there appeared to be no difficulty in coming to a verdict.

It was one suggested by the coroner, for reasons which had their motive in respect for the feelings of the family, and it was unanimously agreed to. It was that the Viscountess Hastingleigh had been found drowned, but how she came by her death there was no evidence to show.

The viscount accepted this verdict without a word, and issued orders for a funeral becoming the rank and dignity of his wife, and even played the part of chief mourner.

There was a large gathering of her friends and of his, and the whole population of the village turned out and followed in respectful silence. The whole household of Hastingleigh Court, also, as far as it was possible, attended the funeral too, for Lady Hastingleigh was very generally beloved.

Nurse Marchmont, however, did not make one of the mourners. She remained with the poor, deserted daughter of her dead lady. She had strenuously exerted herself to get the poor little creature to sleep, so that, when the funeral cavalcade set out from the grand entrance, the motherless child lay in a quiet, peaceful slumber, almost as if she were in a trance.

But she herself, when the sombre procession started, took up a position where she could see it slowly wind down the carriage-drive to the beautiful village church, where the tomb of the Hastingleighs had been kept for centuries.

Upon her knees, with clasped hands, she watched, with straining eyes, that gloomy train of mourners, gasping out sob after sob as though each expiration of breath was the welling up of her last sigh.

And as it faded slowly from her sight, her head drooped lower and lower, until her face was hidden in her hands, and then, with a burst of indescribable anguish, she murmured—

"My poor Lyddy!—my poor, poor Lyddy!"

How long she remained thus she knew not, but the great house was so painfully, awfully still, that the sudden wailing of a child's voice sounded with strange distinctness through the suite of chambers, like the cry of a wounded bird.

She rose up immediately, and tried to remove the traces of her tears. She gazed toward the room in which she had left the child sleeping, and murmured, with a curious expression on her face—

"It is *her* child! Ah! what will *he* do with it? That is the next riddle to be solved."

She moved toward the child's sleeping-chamber musingly, but was startled in her progress by a rustling sound, and by catching a glimpse of a flitting form. At first she fancied it was a woman, enshrouded in a cold gray cloak, escaping from the little Etheline's room; but the figure vanished so rapidly she could not be certain. She darted forward to ascertain, but failed to discover any trace of a person retreating, or to detect even the sound of receding footsteps—any noise, indeed, but the sobbing wail of a child.

For a moment she stood perplexed, and then murmured—

"It was the shadow of a passing cloud—nothing more."

She entered the apartment of her little charge, and beheld her seated up in her bed, gazing, with straining, expanded eyes, toward the door, stretching out her little arms, and crying pitifully—

"Mamma!—mamma!—darling mamma!"

"Blood is thicker than water." A savage murderer has been known to betray loving tenderness to a bird. Nurse Marchmont, hard, and even cruel as she was by nature, had one spark of womanly feeling at least at this moment, for she caught the little weeping thing in her arms and hugged her to her breast, whispering, with quivering lips—

"God help you, poor child! You have no mother now, and, from what I suspect, you will soon be fatherless, too."

Nurse Marchmont's suspicions were but too well founded.

After the funeral, silence and gloom only reigned at Hastingleigh Court.

The viscount still continued a recluse, giving way but too frequently to ardent drinking. He seldom or never quitted his room, save at nightfall. Then it seemed as if he could see a phantom form, invisible to other eyes, ghastly and silent, beckoning him to follow it, and he was impelled to obey.

He would issue from his chamber, pursue the path he had taken on the night of the terrible duel, cross the path until he reached the Stepping Stones, but the moment the bubbling, the gurgling, and rushing of the water caught his ear, he would, apparently, rouse himself from a horrid dream, cast his aching eyes to the woody ridges on the opposite side of the river, clasp his burning forehead with his white hands, and, in a shuddering whisper, would cry—

"No—no! He is there, still lying there, festering, rotting, but there; I cannot pass that place."

Like a frightened hind pursued by a spectre wolf he would fly back to the house, and lock himself in his room again.

A fit of illness followed, then convalescence, and with it a strange, stern, cold, outward calmness.

The name of Cleveland Dysart was ever ringing in his brain; but three months had passed, and no lips had uttered that name in his hearing. He had perused, with a convulsive avidity, every newspaper he could obtain, local and otherwise, but among all the paragraphs, the headings to which gave him a smart shock, he saw none which referred to the "*Strange Discovery of a Dead Body in the Hermit's Dell*" and now he breathed more freely, and felt himself safe.

He made preparations for a long sojourn abroad, dismissed his servants, all but enough to take charge of the house and estates, and, through his lawyers, placed his other mansions in country and town in the hands of agents. When all these business arrangements were completed, he ordered Nurse Marchmont to attend him in a small study, which, of late, he had much occupied.

From the day on which he had so harshly repulsed his beautiful little child he had not seen her—not even mentioned her name—and now Nurse Marchmont instinctively surmised that the summons she had received had reference to her. She, therefore, of her own motion, dressed the sweet little hapless creature to the very greatest advantage, and, taking her tiny hand, she led her dancing and skipping to see her "dear papa."

No sooner, however, did the viscount cast his eyes upon her than he broke into a paroxysm of fearful rage, and, with a howl of execration, bade the nurse remove her from his sight and return alone.

Nurse Marchmont would have remonstrated with him, but, with a red, mad gleam in his eye, he caught up a heavy book, and appeared as though he designed to hurl it at her, and then Nurse Marchmont, with a shriek, fled away.

When she returned the viscount was perfectly composed, and seemed as cold and as rigid as steel. He did not, however, permit his eye to encounter Nurse Marchmont's, but, with a stern, haughty, frigid, downcast gaze, he addressed her—

"I am about to leave England for years Marchmont," he commenced, a little huskily at first; "but ere I depart, I am desirous of completing an arrangement with you of a nature which, I trust, will be satisfactory to you, but which, at the same time, shall be so entire a settlement that I shall never have occasion to see your face again, and you will not be at liberty, on any pretence, inducement, or motive to communicate with me."

"My lord!" she ejaculated, with surprise.

He waved his hand imperiously.

"It is for you to listen and obey," he replied, in a fiercely dictatorial tone.

"But my poor sister, Lyddy," persisted the nurse, her selfish instincts overpowering her habitual deference.

He stamped his foot, and continued, angrily—

"I have told you I will arrange everything with you with which we may be connected before I depart, and arrange it once for all time. Firstly, I will refer to your sister, Lydia. I have already had her, as you know long since, carefully examined by the greatest medical authority on all cases of mental derangement, and I am assured that she is hopelessly insane. Perhaps there is something to lay at my door in this matter, but I am sure very much more at her own."

"My lord, my lord—when you first met her, she was a young, innocent girl—a mere child!" interposed Nurse Marchmont, with fierce reproach. "You, you vowed that you loved her with all your heart, your soul—"

"Silence, woman!" he shouted, wrathfully, so as to drown her voice. "What though I did, perhaps I really loved her when I said so; I think I did. But a sea of blue blood surged between us, and kept us so far apart, that I had nought to return to her, when, as it is romantically said, she yielded up her life and soul for me, but—a money compensation."

Nurse Marchmont groaned, and ground her teeth, and clutched her hands convulsively, but she did not utter a word.

The viscount, with a swift, furtive glance at her face, saw the expression on it, and then partly averted his own; he went on as if he had not seen it—

"That question, Marchmont, was between her and me, and nothing now can change or retrieve it. To ameliorate her unhappy condition, I have settled upon her an annuity, which will provide a good home and every comfort for her so long as she lives. This annuity will be paid every quarter to you, in trust for her."

Nurse Marchmont started, and pressed her hands tightly upon her chest, but did not speak. She stood with downcast eyes, silent and motionless, yet eagerly awaiting what was to follow.

It was evidently a task which caused the viscount some trouble, for he uttered several disjointed sentences before he settled on the opening of the new subject; but at length he said, in a slightly quieter tone—

"As the sister of Lydia, and as the—a—faithful servant, I had intended to make some provision for you, but a purpose, I intend—inexorably—do you understand me?—inflexibly, unrelentingly, to carry into execution—urges me to give you an opportunity of being settled far beyond the reach of want for the remainder of your life. Are you willing to embrace this opportunity?"

"What—what—my lord—is your purpose?" she demanded, in a low tone, and with a vague impression of what was coming.

He cleared his throat again twice or thrice. It was strange how some inward emotion seemed to excoriate it.

"There is an engagement, I believe, with a view to marriage, subsisting between you and my valet, Lister, is there not?" he questioned, adopting with an effort, which, however, he did not betray, his icy, distant tone.

"There is, my lord," she responded, with a fluttering at the heart.

"And you are sufficiently attached to each other," he pursued, "to marry at once if you had the means?"

"I can answer for myself—yes, my lord," she said, a little quickly, again prompted by secret mercenary reflections.

"And I can answer for Lister," he subjoined, promptly. "So far all is well," he added, slowly, and with a painful deliberation. "Now Marchmont, listen to me attentively, and heed me carefully. I will give you a handsome wedding portion, and I will settle also upon you an annuity for your life, upon one condition."

He paused.

Nurse Marchmont felt as if she should choke. Her heart beat and throbbed even to an agony, a violent singing in her ears deafened her, her eyes for a moment grew dim—she guessed the condition, and knew it would utterly frustrate a wild plan of her own, and all her secret hopes.

But she did not faint. Slightly recovering her self-control, she said, almost inaudibly:

"Name your condition, my lord!"

He pointed with his finger in the direction of the nursery, and displaying his white teeth with a bitterly vindictive expression on his mouth, he said, gratingly—

"That child yonder—you must take it, keep it, rear it as your own, give it your name—any name but mine—and, upon the salvation of your immortal soul, never let me see its hated face, never let me hear its name, nor an allusion to it, never more—never more!"

The nurse raised her eyes to his, and, clasping her hands, exclaimed, entreatingly—

"Oh, my lord, think! Do not be too hasty—remember she is your own ch—"

He checked her as violently and vehemently as before.

Bringing his face close to hers, he glared into her eyes.

"Woman!" he growled, "you perused the note which you found addressed to the viscountess, and handed to me—every word of it—I know you did. Now you understand the motive by which I am actuated. Accept my terms at a word, or I will dismiss you without even a gratuity, or, what will be yet worse, one farthing toward the support of yonder miserable lunatic."

The nurse shrank back and covered her eyes with her hands. Although she had a vague notion of what was coming, it was still a blow so tremendous it took away her breath. Like even a long-expected death deals a shock when it does come at last, so this proposition, though partly anticipated, fearfully agitated her.

"Answer!" he cried, peremptorily. "Answer without hesitation! Yea or nay? I have one at my back to supply your place if you refuse."

"May—may I—if you please, my lord, consult with—with Lister on this strange subject?" she presently stammered.

"I have consulted with him, and he assents without an equivocation or reserve," replied the viscount, emphatically.

Nurse Marchmont uttered an irrepressible sigh, and then, bowing her head, ejaculated, almost meekly—

"I assent to your lordship's proposition."

"Enough," returned the viscount, suffering also a heavy sigh to escape him, yet it seemed to be one of relief. "All the necessary papers are prepared. I leave Hastingleigh Court to-night for London. When there, I will instruct my lawyers to witness your marriage to Lister, to receive certain necessary signatures from you both, to pay you the moneys to be appropriated to you. Then, having changed your names, and adopted that—that—brat, calling it and rearing it up in your fictitious names, making the world believe that it is your own, and yours only, you will settle down in some secluded place where we can never meet again. Now leave me!"

"Will you not, my lord, take one last look at the poor little innocent child?" asked Marchmont, with a slight whine in her tone, which, unhappily, was not genuine.

"No!" he thundered. "Quit me!"

The woman bent to him deferentially, and retreated from the room.

She made her way to the nursery in which her little charge lay sleeping, and as she watched its flushed cheeks and lineaments, so wondrously like those of its hapless mother, she murmured—

"Lyddy, my girl, you are amply avenged upon her who took your place. You are now—"

She started, turned round, and listened attentively; but a fancied footfall gliding fawnlike near to her was not repeated.

"And I am to be the reputed mother of the daughter of a viscountess—ha, ha!—although no one but myself and Lister will know it," she concluded, with a disagreeable laugh.

Within a month from that date Nurse Marchmont was married to Lister, and they had settled down under an assumed name in a quiet suburb of London. The lovely, aristocratic-looking child they brought with them, at first created some stir in the neighborhood, for that she was their child was scarcely credited; but it soon subsided, especially as the new-married couple lived very secluded, as if they intended to carry out their contract with the viscount faithfully.

Withal at times, when Nurse Marchmont gazed on the fair face of her young charge, she would murmur—

"Never more! Never more! How easy it is to say never more!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

WON BY THE NECK.

CHAPTER I.

It was in the year 1861, after Garibaldi had bombarded Palermo, that the United States frigate Thunder lay to off the Mole. The Thunder was a fine vessel, and her crew, from the captain down to the youngest powder-boy, were as fine a set of fellows as ever donned the Navy blue or hoisted the stars and stripes.

It is unnecessary to touch upon the political changes brought about in Italy by the brief and memorable events of the year '60; but so great and rapid a revolution could not take place without many attendant evils. Thus, with the abolition of the monastic system, not only was there a clerical disorganization, but, from the suppression of nunneries, it came about that many helpless women of all ages were, so to speak, thrown upon the world. For them an entirely new condition of life was created, and in many instances they who were helpless before were, by the whirlwind that had swept away so many old landmarks, made more hopeless still. It is necessary to say so much, because the main incident about to be related arose entirely out of the new state of things thus briefly glanced at.

Another not unusual attendant on a sudden social disruption also followed, as was to be expected. There was generated for the time a licence which displayed itself in many lawless acts, especially in open and daring brigandage. Bodies of men banded together, either desperate from the loss of means, or availing themselves of the unsettled state of affairs, carried on their depredations to such an extent, and in many instances so openly, as to give rise to a suspicion that they were secretly favored by persons in high social position.

These hardened men, far from confining themselves within the fastnesses of the hills, spread themselves abroad through the Val de Amaza, and defiled its lonely vineyards and gardens by the commission of many atrocities. Nay, so confident were they of protection, or so careless as to punishment, that many of their members were to be seen on the Marina itself; nor was it till some time afterwards that it was found necessary in the public interest to deal with these ruffians with a strong hand.

Among the most notorious of these banditti chiefs was one Gabrielli, a personage with whom our narrative will be found intimately to connect itself. This man had at the time of our story, by many a daring deed, and by many a deed of remorseless and cold-blooded cruelty, made his name a source of terror and loathing throughout the whole of the region which stretches for miles inland from the city and harbor of Palermo. He was said to possess all the vindictiveness characteristic of the worst type of the Sicilian character. His favorite plan was to seize the person of some member of a family of wealth and position, and by threats of immediate assassination, and in the case of women of even worse, conveyed openly through the aid of one of his villainous fraternity, to extort the payment of an enormous ransom.

It was at a time shortly before the lovely city and its beautiful environs had been reduced to this condition of social disorder and demoralization, that the United States frigate Thunder first hove to at no great distance from the mole.

The captain and his second in command were walking the quarter-deck on a balmy evening—such a one as is to be enjoyed only in those lovely latitudes and a few other favored spots on the globe—shortly before the hour of dusk, when stepping up to them, and saluting in due form, a young midshipman, fair, ruddy, and of an open, engaging countenance, preferred a request to go on shore to spend twenty-four hours with a friend.

As he came forward a few hurried remarks were exchanged in a low voice between the two seniors, and although with a good-natured smile, yet in a very decided tone, the youth was met with a refusal.

"No, no, Master Bob," said the captain, "you have had your share and more lately, and to-night you must content yourself with remaining on board."

"But it is something very particular—a promise, sir."

"No doubt, and a very particular attraction, too; but a little self-denial—or, at any rate, denial of some sort—will only give the greater zest to your next meeting. Not a word more; I cannot grant you leave to-night. And yet, Ramsey," added the kind-hearted skipper, as the youth descended to his own quarters, "it goes against the grain to refuse him. He is as fine, honest, straightforward a young fellow as we have among us."

"Of course, it's the old errand—the pretty sweetheart?"

"*La belle Hélène*," no doubt. A very exceedingly lovely girl she is. By the bye, *en dit*, that you, my dear Ramsey, are a little *touche* in that quarter.

"I! Nonsense, my dear sir! But, to change the subject, can it be possible that those rascally cut-throats can seriously intend paying us a visit? I thought banditti confined their gentle operations to the land service."

"I can't say. Our authority is supposed to be well informed, and we are not at home you must remember; so you will keep a keen lookout, Ramsey, and so good-bye for awhile, as I have to be present at a consultation of the authorities on shore."

While the captain's gig, propelled by the strong arms of its crew, was clearing the calm, bright water, our friend, Master Bob—whose godfather and godmother in his baptism had added to his ancient surname, Egerton, the additional name of Robert—after watching the boat till it had nearly arrived at its destination, quietly descended to the middies' mess-room, and, addressing a youngster about his own age (nineteen or twenty,) said—

"Fred, my boy, you owe me a good turn for fishing you out of the Herring Pond. I beg you will pardon me for reminding you of such a trifle, but I want you to show yourself grateful."

"Speak, Bob! You needn't fear, if its anything I can do, that I am likely to refuse."

"Speak—quotha! And that's the very thing I must do to make you understand, but I'll make my yarn as short as possible."

"All right, old fellow!"

"I have no secret from you, and you know all about my darling Helen."

"Stay, Bob! Not all. I only know she is a lovely girl, half Italian, half English, and that you are head over heels in love with her, and, for that matter, she is in the same plight as regards yourself."

"Well, you must know that before the jolly row lately, she had spent some time in one of the hundred convents they have yonder. Her father, who was a Sicilian nobleman, one of the oldest they have—I mean the oldest families—before he died placed her there, as much for education and protection as aught else, and on his deathbed wrote over to England, whither his wife, my Helen's mother, had been compelled to return for her health's sake, and begged her to proceed at once to Palermo. She arrived in the middle of the siege, and it was long before she could enter the place, and when she did the count was dead."

"Poor things! Bad times these for them to lose their only protector."

"Not their only one. You know what a vagabond on the face of the earth I have been—the East, Australia, the Prairies and where not. Well, it so happened that I had a friend serving with Garibaldi. I then belonged to the Saucebox gunboat, stationed at Gibraltar, and I got leave—and, to cut it short, I entered Palermo with my friend, and how I became acquainted first of all with Helen (her mother's name,) was thus: A lot of fellows—not with the best intentions, I fear—under the pretence of releasing the nuns, and that sort of thing, had broken open the convent where she, poor girl, was residing. Fred, my boy, I fear there was some bad work on that and one or two other occasions. However, I was, as luck would have it, walking along, staring about me, like the great lubber I was, when I saw a girl running with all her might, and a not very healthy-looking party close at her heels. Her face was blanched with fear, and her beautiful long black hair streaming behind her."

"'Avast there, my lad,' said I, as I caught her around the waist. 'Hands off! Don't you see the young lady is frightened.'"

"The brute wouldn't be persuaded, so I had to let him feel the weight of a trifle I had in my hand of cold steel."

"While I was putting together my best Italian, she still clinging to me, said, in the purest English, barring a lovely little bit of foreign:"

"'In Heaven's name, sir, protect me!'"

"'Don't alarm yourself, young lady,' I replied, delighted to hear the dear old language in such a Babel, and from such lips. 'Only tell me where you want to go.'"

"That was just what she couldn't. She seemed a very baby outside her convent walls. However, after a good deal of trouble, I was so fortunate as to place her in the care of her mother, and, in short, I have known and visited them whenever I could from that day till I had to leave, and, as I needn't tell you, when I could get ashore while we have been cruising up and down here. In fact—I don't mind telling you—it was because I had learnt the Thunder was ordered here I got my uncle, the commodore, to manage my joining. I saw her last night, and had faithfully promised to go to-night—in fact, I meant to know my fate—when, for some cause or other, I am refused leave, if you please; but I know pretty well to whom I am indebted for that kind turn."

"And now, Bob, tell me what I am to do."

"Not much. In the first place, keep my secret, and then lend me a hand to get ashore."

"Get ashore?"

"Yes! When it's dark—or, at least, as dark as it is likely to be—I mean to slip over the ship's side and swim ashore."

"But do you know the distance?"

"Oh, I have swam twice as far, and in a rough sea to boot. I don't think of that; but it seems that some report has got afloat about one of these infernal brigands trying on their little game with the Thunder. It's nonsense, you'll say. Yes; but it will be no nonsense if there should be any alarm, or I should be seen. They'll be peppering away at any or everything afloat within two hundred yards of the ship, and I shall have to run the gauntlet of some scores of bullets."

After discussing their plan, and having waited for the watch to be changed, Bob, with the assistance of his brother middy, having first, for some reason or other, which he vowed afterward he could never explain, fastened the rope by which he was to descend several times round his waist, dropped quietly into the water on the side farthest from the land, which happened to be the side in shadow. The rope was a thin long coil, such as he had often used in lassoing wild cattle on the prairies, in which art he was as skilful as a native. With some little difficulty he contrived to fasten the remaining end by passing it over his shoulder, without making any noise. He then struck boldly out till he was parallel with the vessel at a distance of one hundred yards, trusting to escape notice. Unfortunately for him, the moon was, though new, clear, and the watch being on the alert, he had the pleasure, after being thrice challenged, of receiving the attention he had hoped to escape. Pop! pop! pop! went the rifles, and down, after a good long breath, went Master Bob, not venturing to put even his nose above water till he was compelled for want of breath. By that time he had put another good hundred yards between himself and his uncanny friends, the "jollies," and a slight ripple agitating the surface, he was permitted to pursue his watery journey without further molestation. But not without danger. For when within a cable's length from shore he saw to his dismay the captain taking his seat in the stern of his gig, and telling the men to pull with a will. They had heard the firing, and he was hastening back to his ship in consequence. By good fortune, however, he escaped this danger as well as he had the other. He did not anticipate much difficulty about landing, and he was right.

A free-and-easy story to a sailor in a small fishing-boat (backed up by a silver coin) about having fallen over from the ship's boat, and he stood on *terra firma*. Having dried his clothes at a small wine-shop which the friendly fisherman showed him, and left his "rope's end" behind, after securing the only small bed-room the place could boast, he walked quickly, his heart beating with the elation of success and the joy of anticipation, to the home of his beloved Helen.

On entering the house, he was not slow to perceive that something was amiss. The women servants were in tears, the man wringing his hands and calling on every saint in the calendar. Brushing past them, and with a heavy foreboding, he opened the door of the countess's apartment unannounced, and looked round for the one object so dear to him. Alas! she was no longer there. In a few passionate words her mother, coming hastily toward him, explained her absence, placing as she did so a letter in his hand. Her daughter had been carried off by the wretch Gabrielli, and the "letter" was a dirty scrawl, demanding, on peril of her daughter's life and honor, a large sum of money, to be conveyed by herself, either alone, or attended by one female, by noon to-morrow to a secluded spot in the hills, which was described with considerable precision.

CHAPTER II.

For a few moments the young midshipman stood gazing at the paper stupefied, but only for a few moments. His was one of those active minds which grasp at once the difficulties of the moment, and convert a danger into safety. Besides, young as he was, and looking still younger, he had already known many adventures and encountered many perils, and thus it was, ere he had led the distracted mother to a seat, he already saw, as he imagined, a way to extricate his beloved Helen from the terrible position in which she was placed.

"Do not be downcast, dear lady," he said, with the utmost tenderness and respect. "May I ask you a few questions?"

"Speak, dear friend."

"Are—is this villain so far to be trusted that his word may be relied on?"

"I do not understand your question."

"From what you may have heard, do you suppose that hitherto your daughter is unharmed—that, providing the amount is paid, she will be restored to you safe—and—as she was when these ruffians seized her?"

"They tell me he never offers violence to his captives until his terms are refused."

"And then?"

"Ah, speak not of it!"

"Calm yourself. And have you, may I ask, the requisite amount—three thousand florins—it is a large sum?"

"I have not. Late events left my poor husband's affairs in a very unsatisfactory condition, but I have the means of obtaining the amount from a relation of the late count."

"And what do you propose doing?"

"Alas! I have no alternative. I must go to the spot, and at the time, and with the money."

"Do so—you shall not go alone; and now let me advise you to endeavor to take some repose. Leave all the rest to me. I am very young, it is true—but, ah, dear lady! it is not now the time to dwell on *that*—but all I value most on earth is at stake, and I feel I shall be able to rescue your daughter, or I will die in the attempt. At what distance is the spot appointed?"

"Nearly an hour from the city."

"Good. Now, if you will show your confidence in me, you will at once retire to rest, and to-morrow at daybreak I will rejoin you. Adieu, dear lady!"

Having quitted the house, and ascertained the address of the chief military authority of the city, young Egerton hastened thither, and, accepting no denial, was at length ushered into the official presence. He told his story, and at length contrived to throw so much of his own energy into the old man that he prevailed upon him, late as it was, to accompany him to the houses of more than one of the civil authorities. They professed themselves, as indeed they seemed to be, utterly powerless, though really very much shocked, and at length promised that ere noon on the morrow a reward of two thousand florins should be publicly proclaimed for the capture, dead or alive, of the notorious Gabrielli.

Escaping from these worthy seniors with a feeling of very decided contempt, which he took no pains whatever to conceal, the youth quickened his steps till he arrived at the little *cabaret* where he had secured his night's lodging. Here he inquired the whereabouts of his friend the fisherman, and having obtained that, he started once more in search of that good-natured mariner. With him he spent the greater portion of the time still left, and then retired to snatch an hour or two's sleep, his last words being—

"Remember, Francisco, daybreak!"

"Right, signor, I will not fail."

True to his promise, Robert Egerton stood before the mother of his beloved Helen. She did not recognize her brave young friend at first, and well she might not. Dressed in the attire of the attendant of a young lady of fashion, his fresh face beautifully adorned with a fringe of fair ringlets, it must have been a keen judge indeed who would have detected his disguise. True, he was somewhat tall of his years, but not so far out of the due proportion of feminine grace as to attract observation. In addition to his metamorphosis of sex, our young friend carried in his hand a beautiful chaplet or *immortelle*, round, and of large size.

"Do not notice it, dear lady, nor construe it into an augury or omen of ill. I do not take it to strew on the grave of our—of your daughter, but rather to assist in preserving her in life, only it were well that you should not know anything beyond this bare and indefinite statement; and about the ransom?"

"It will be provided in time—and here it is."

At this moment a servant brought a parcel, with his master's kind greeting and good wishes, but in short, excusing himself for not coming in person, and—in short, as Bob said under his breath, sneaking out of it like a hound.

At length, setting forth, they procured a hired carriage to convey them as far on the journey to the appointed spot as they thought might be ventured on without jeopardizing the safety of the object of their expedition.

"I do not offer you my arm, lady, because, doubtless, there are already eyes—keen eyes—scrutinizing every movement and gesture we may make. Permit that I take the packet of money, and walk slightly behind you, as a dependant should; and pray remember I only accompany you because you cannot speak the language fluently, and are fearful of mistakes."

They were still some two hundred yards from the spot appointed—easily to be known by a tree of great age and peculiar form, which grew by its side—when the figure of a man suddenly appeared before them, barring the narrow path on which they were advancing.

They were in no doubt as to this man being the redoubted Gabrielli. His face was perfectly familiar, his portrait by no means rare. There was nothing repulsive about the man, with the exception of his forehead, which was villainously low and receding, like that of a baboon. In all else he was rather handsome than otherwise, and his figure was symmetrical in the extreme, showing to great advantage beneath the costume by which it was set off.

"How, lady, is it that you do not come alone?"

"Pardon, signor," exclaimed the mock companion, in a voice both soft and tremulous; "my mistress speaks with difficulty the language of the hills."

"But thou, pretty one, art more of an adept. Come, how say'st thou? A tall and comely lass such as thou would make a brave mistress for a brigand chief."

"Alas, noble sir, I cannot leave my lady—at least, till her daughter is restored to her."

"Ha!"

But the young officer stood the angry and suspicious glance without flinching, merely casting his eyes down, as if afraid of any excess of gallantry on the part of his interlocutor.

"Thou sayest well, and, by the by, here we are at the place of tryst. Hast brought the money?"

"Noble sir," said the would-be damsel, "we hear bad tales of you, but 'tis said that with them who keep faith you act honestly. I have the money; but how are we to be assured of the young lady's safety?"

"Corpo di Bacchо! but you are a mettled wench. How if I say the young lady is a fitting subject for your sombre-looking flower-wreath?"

With all his self-possession, the hideous suggestion almost tempted the disguised sailor overmuch. He put great constraint on himself, however, and was rewarded for his prudence.

"Look," the robber said, "at yonder tuft of shrubs. Behind them, bound, it is true, but safe, uninjured, and alone, is the object of your journey. There is not one of my band within sight. So soon as I have counted the money, so surely do I go and produce *la bella*."

"Shall I, then, pay the gentleman?" asked the meek attendant of her mistress.

The words were first uttered in Italian, and then, as if recollecting herself, in the English language; but in both cases the words were uttered as if obtaining permission.

The countess, who was ready to swoon with anxiety, merely bowed her head in acquiescence, and the money was timidly, but without any further hesitation, handed over to the desperado, who, possibly from habit rather than any actual suspicion, counted the *rouleaux* with one hand, while his other played with the handle of a formidable-looking dagger.

"It is just," at last he said, "and fortunate for you it is so. One coin wanting, and—"

The rest of the sentence was only conveyed by a look and a gesture; but both the one and the other contained so much inherent brutality that no doubt was left of the truth of the stories afloat as to the man's real nature—at least, in Egerton's mind.

"And now in five minutes."

"Five minutes!" said the sham soubrette, showing some very white teeth and arching her well-shaped eyebrows. "Why, down yonder, I have heard *friends* (this in a whisper) say that the chief, Gabrielli, had the swiftest foot of any man on the mountains."

"Ha, ha, little coquette, then, as sure as fate, when I return with yonder fair one you shall pay for witnessing the truth of our *friend's* report, and so saying he started up the hill with the speed of a deer.

Ill for him that his greedy nature made him waste thirty seconds in securing his blood money. In those thirty seconds the flimsy outside wreath was detached from the well-prepared, ready coil, and the wretch had not sped twenty yards when the fatal noose was round his neck, cast with the accuracy which long practice, and at full speed of horse, alone could teach. A sudden jerk, and to all intents and purposes the daring brigand was as helpless as an unweaned child.

"Quick, dear lady, quick; one moment of heroism, and then give way to what weakness you will. Take this knife—hasten to yon thicket. I see her garments glistening in the sun. Haste, while I secure our prey."

And running up to his prostrate enemy, again and again was the cord coiled round the robber's prostrate form, and as the two women came hurrying down, trembling, yet losing not a moment, the gallant youth grasped the body in his sinewy arms, and bore him by the way along which they had come.

"Don't speak, ladies—not a word! Helen, take up his rifle, and keep close to me. Five minutes more—five short minutes—and we will defy the devil and all his works. Safe!" he at length exclaimed, breathing hard; "safe." But it was a close run. Look at the villains on the hills. But there are two sides to a bargain.

So saying he gave a strong breath to a whistle he produced from—well, the bosom of his dress, and galloping up from the direction of the city came the honest fisherman and a score or two of soldiers. At sight of this reinforcement the mountaineers beat a rapid retreat.

They placed the strongly-bound bandit chief across one of the trooper's horses, and ere another hour the news of his capture was spread all over Palermo.

The reward of two thousand florins was cheerfully paid, which the happy Egerton handed over intact to his friend Francisco. As to his own reward—well, if you should chance to be at Philadelphia next time the Thunder is paid off, and will notice the wonderful resemblance existing between some remarkably handsome children who wait to greet its commander—Robert Egerton by name—and *la belle Hélène*, you will be disposed to believe that he received *his* reward, especially as that fair, but more matronly lady accompanies them.

"But how about that scrape of his—going ashore without leave—was it overlooked?"

Was it overlooked? *Was it*— Get along with you!

J. M. S.

HIS "ANNIE LAURIE."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ELLA WHEELER.

Miss Haskell paused under a tall sheltering oak, that grew by the road-side, and sitting down on the green grass, took off her "sundown" and fanned her flushed face leisurely. Miss Haskell was a city girl, born and bred; and she had come down to Eastbrook farm, to spend a summer with her aunt and cousins, and rest after a winter's dissipation. She had just been down to the Post-office, half a mile distance from her aunt's residence, and now she paused under the oak to rest and read her letters.

There were two—one from her mother, and one from Edith Lansing, her friend, who was spending the summer at Newport. She read her mother's first. A tender, loving letter, full of kindly advice in regard to getting cold, and exposing her health to injury, full of family items, and closing with the sentence—"Be sure and return by the first week in September, for the party from Newport is coming back then; and you know, as well as I, that Albert Smiley is too much of a flirt to be trusted out of sight long. He is very much in love with you *now*, but do not trust too much in yourself; and remember you are twenty-four years old—and men like Albert Smiley do not offer themselves every day."

She replaced the letter in its envelope, and looked thoughtfully up at the blue sky above her. The sound of a reaper clicking through the golden wheat in a field near by fell upon her ears, and she turned her glance to the harvest scene. The reaper, drawn by four stout horses, driven by a man in a blue blouse, was followed by four men, also in blue and brown drilling, who bound the grain into golden sheaves. Over it all, the yellow sunshine and the blue sky. It was a poetical scene, and Miss Haskell viewed it with a poet's eye.

One of the binders began to sing "Annie Laurie," in a rich tenor voice. The sound floated up to where Miss Haskell sat.

> "Her voice is low and sweet,
> And she's all the world to me,
> And for bonnie Annie Laurie,
> I'd lay me down and die,"

sang the strong voice, and the red blood shot into Laura Haskell's cheeks, and a sparkle to her eyes.

Then she tore open Edith Lansing's letter, and began to read. It was full of news and gossip, but there was only one sentence that she took much interest in. That sentence was—"Albert Smiley inquires for you daily, and thinks the season spoiled without your presence. However, there has a perfectly stunning girl appeared, a Miss De Foe, a beauty and an heiress; and he is likely to enjoy himself, I think, even without you. Oh, Laura, you ought to be here. You were not wise to bury yourself this summer. How do you exist?"

Laura replaced her sundown, drew on her gloves, and resumed her walk.

A little less than a quarter of a mile brought her to the old brown farm-house, and she entered the gate and sat down on the porch, and looked up at the two girls who sat sewing and rocking in the shade. One was her Cousin Amanda, and the other a near neighbor's daughter, Annie Graeme, who often ran over of an afternoon, to chat with Amanda while she sewed.

"Are you tired?" she asked, as Laura threw herself upon one of the stairs and leaned her head upon her hand.

"A little. The walk is longer than I am accustomed to, and the day is warm. But I found two letters awaiting me, and was repaid for my trouble."

She drew a costly lace handkerchief from her pocket with a jeweled hand, and fanned her flushed cheeks with it. A little tinge of bitterness came into Annie Graeme's gentle face, as she watched her. That handkerchief cost more than any dress she possessed. That ring, more than her whole wardrobe. Laura Haskell had every thing heart could desire. Wealth, beauty, position. Why could she not be contented with so much, and not come and take away the little happiness within the reach of others. And then a passage of Scripture came into her mind—"Unto those that have, more shall be given; and from those that have nothing, even what they seem to have shall be taken away." She thought it was coming to pass, literally, that summer.

And Miss Haskell, little dreaming what was in the girl's mind, looked up at her and Amanda, and thought—"After all, they are happier than I am. No fear of stern Dame Fashion disturbs them; no worry about their future position in society alarms them. They will marry for love, and be good, happy wives. I, with my riches and accomplishments, must look out for a suitable partner, and marry *well*, without thinking of love."

The men were coming out of the field, and one of them was still singing the refrain of "Annie Laurie." The girls listened; Amanda with idle interest, Annie with a flush, and a troubled look in her eyes, Laura with uplifted glance and thoughtful air.

"Who is it singing?" Annie said, getting up and putting aside her work, and trying to appear unconscious.

"Oh, West Livermore, of course," Amanda answered. "He is forever singing that song now."

Annie tied on her hat, and hurried home to help her mother prepare the supper for the harvest men. And, as she went, she listened to the strong voice of the singer, and remembered how he *used* to sing the same song only the summer before, lingering upon the name of "Annie" as he now lingered upon the other name—Laura.

Laura Haskell sat in the same position, when the men came in to supper. Her elbow upon her lap, her face upon her hands, her dark eyes watching the clouds. West Livermore coming out after supper found her there, and sat down near her. A man in a blue blouse and overalls, with brown, rough hands and heavy boots. But his figure was that of an Apollo—his face that of a Greek god, and his glance and voice thrilled Laura Haskell, as not one of the elegant society beaux had ever the power to do.

"Did I not see you on the highway this afternoon?" he asked, after watching her in silence for a moment.

"Yes, I went down to the office."

"I thought I could not be mistaken in your walk and figure."

The words were commonplace enough, but they brought the quick blood to Laura Haskell's cheeks, and her eyes sparkled. She had listened all her life to praise and flattery from elegant men.

"Did you find the expected letters awaiting you at the office?"

"Yes, I found two. My friends want me to return."

"And you will leave us—when?"

"Not until September."

"Four weeks yet, at least. Well we must make the most of them, for they will be all too short. Harvest is well along and I shall not need to work quite so hard after next week. I shall let my men do more, and I will rest a little and endeavor to relieve the dullness for you by giving you some rides about our beautiful prairies."

He went down the path whistling a plaintive air, and Laura followed him with dark, troubled eyes. How handsome he was—how handsome. His locks glistened in the sunshine like burnished gold, his face was flushed with health and exercise, and his eyes were blue as the skies. She looked after him and thought of Albert Smiley, with his narrow chest and consumptive figure, his pale, sickly countenance and foppish airs. Ah, but his *purse* was plethoric, while West Livermore's fortune lay in this little farm and rambling farmhouse, and in his own splendid person and warm heart.

The night settled down sultry and breathless. Miss Haskell went out in the yard, and stood at the gate in the gloaming trying to get a breath of fresh air. She heard West whistling down by the stables. He was so happy always, so contented with his humble life; and she, with all she possessed to make life happy, was restless and dissatisfied. West Livermore was her aunt's stepson, the son of a second husband, now deceased, and West owned the house and farm, and kept things together and supported Mrs. Livermore and her daughter Amanda.

Laura stood by the gate when he came up from the stables. The moon was rising, full and round above the hill. It surrounded Laura's face and figure with a silvery halo, and made her look almost ethereal in the pale white light. Her dress was white, her arms and neck bare, and white as snow. Her brown hair was tied back from her forehead with a white ribbon, and rippled in loose, fluffy waves behind her ears. How very fair and delicate she was; West's blue eyes glowed down upon her, and his large brown hand closed over the white one that rested on the gate. She did not draw it away.

"You look like a wraith," he said, as he leaned near her, "but I see you are tangible."

He was very near her. She could not have drawn away from him to have saved her life. The magnetism of his presence held her there, and she had no desire to go away.

"How bright the moon is," he said. "If to-morrow evening is like this we will ride. That is if you will go."

"I shall be pleased to. Oh, see that lovely cloud!" She lifted her face to the cloud, and it was turned up just even with his shoulder.

He did not look up at the cloud, but down at the fair face so dangerously near. One hand covered hers still; the other fell lightly upon her shoulder—his head bent down, and his lips met hers.

"Laura," called her aunt from the house, "you will get cold in your thin dress. Come in, child."

She lifted her eyes as she turned to go, and her cheeks flamed crimson at the fire and passion she saw in the face above her. Men had made glowing and passionate declarations of love to her, but she had never seen such worship in any man's eyes before.

That night she had dreams, sweet, restless dreams, that broke her slumbers all night long, yet refreshed her as no sound sleep could do.

The morning came cooler and fresher than the preceding day. The skies were fleecy with light clouds, the sun warm and mellow, the fields golden with sheaves of grain. In all her life she never forgot that day and evening. West did not work in the fields, but lingered at the house, leaving his men to stack the grain that he had helped to cut and bind.

He stood under the window and talked to her, while she worked at some bit of dainty work. Talked lightly and merrily, or gravely and seriously as it might be, but his eyes told one story whenever they fell upon her.

His lips told it that evening as they rode under the full moon down the pleasant lane beneath the drooping branches of the graceful locust trees. His blue, blue eyes shone down upon her, his breath fanned her cheek.

She lifted her eyes to his, and her cheeks crimsoned. His arm slipped about her waist.

"Darling," he whispered, "I love you. I want you for my wife. Can you ever learn to love me?"

Learn to love him! Why with every fibre of her being, with all her heart and soul and strength she loved this man by her side. The sound of his voice, saying that he loved her, was sweeter than any music to her ears.

He drew her unresisting to his breast. He kissed her on lips and cheeks, murmuring words of tenderness. In all her life she never tasted of such joy again.

"Then you do love me," he whispered, "you will be my wife?"

"I do love you—dearly, dearly," she made answer. "But I cannot promise to be your wife. I must have time to think."

They rode on under the light of the full moon. He told her of his prospects, his farm and house, free from debt, his strong arms, and willing hands, his loving, loyal heart.

"I am willing to work," he said, "and every year will bring us added prosperity. You need not work hard—I would not want you to. Mother would stay with us, and she would oversee and take charge of the work, as has been her custom. Amanda will marry in October, and go to a home of her own. I shall build an addition to the house, and improve the surroundings. I think we could be very happy."

"You must give me time to think," Laura answered. "I love you as I never loved any man before; but I have been accustomed to wealth, and ease, and luxury; to summers at the seaside and winters in society. I must give up all that if I become your wife. Let me have time to think."

He held her close, close to his breast, as if he would never let her go, when he helped her to alight at the door. She clung to him for one short moment, and then sped away to her room.

The days went by in a golden dream. There never before were such fields of yellow stubble; never such meadows, with their ripe red second crop of clover; never such mellow sunshine and languid winds. She gave herself entirely up to the delicious happiness of her heart's first and best love, putting aside all thoughts of the other life. She and West walked together in the orchard shadows, leaned together over the gate, or rode through the lanes and over the highway. Yet she made him no promise. Only one day she said to him as she leaned upon his arm, "I grow to love you better every day. I am afraid I can *never* give you up. Better give up the whole world beside."

And West waited for her decision patiently and hopefully. He believed she would be his in the end—believed her heart would triumph over her ambition, for he knew that she loved him.

And Annie Graeme, watching the two, hugged the pain at her heart, and if any tears fell, they fell inwardly. West sang "Annie Laurie" a great deal those days, lingering upon the lines—

> "And 'twas there that Annie Laurie
> Gave me her promise true,
> Gave me her promise true,
> That ne'er forgot will be,
> And for bonnie Annie Laurie,
> I'd lay me down and dee."

He built airy castles for the future, and Laura Haskell reigned queen in them all. Laura Haskell's voice made the music that rang through the castle halls, her dark eyes lighted the dim corridors. But like many another, West Livermore awoke to find that "Dreams are but dreams at the very best."

Miss Haskell received a letter one day in a man's handwriting. It was the third week in August, and she was growing more in love with West Livermore every day. She had almost decided to stay on the farm through September, and only go home to make her preparations for marriage. But the letter came in a man's handwriting, and she opened it and read:

"MISS LAURA HASKELL: *Dear Lady*—I write to ask you the question I have many times attempted to ask you with my lips, but have been prevented. You have known for months that I desired your hand in marriage, that I desired to make you my wife, choosing you from among all the ladies of my acquaintance to rule my heart and home. I begin to feel the need of a home—and a wife. I am tired of this butterfly existence. I have wealth, position and a good name to offer you. Will you accept? I desire to know your answer *immediately*, and please reply without delay.

"Your ardent admirer,
"A. SMILEY."

Laura Haskell turned the perfumed missive over in her hand, and smiled scornfully. The chirography was like Albert Smiley's character, weak and wavering. The epistle was like his disposition, selfish, conceited, egotistical. He had not written one word of love, but in a condescending and commanding manner had told her he desired to make her his wife, and wished her to give her answer immediately.

"Which means," Laura muttered, "that he prefers me for a wife, but is anxious to settle down in life, and if I decline the honor he is in haste to know, that he may propose to Miss De Foe and offer her the golden inducements he holds up to dazzle my eyes."

Miss Haskell spoke with bitter scorn, and with all her strength she hated the writer of the letter at that moment. Had West Livermore come to her side just then, and asked her to name the day, she would have named it, and an early one, too. But West had gone to mill, and would not return till late in the evening. Amanda was busy with her mother in the kitchen, and she was left to her own thoughts. And after the first heat of anger had worn off, she viewed her two unanswered proposals calmly, and with a clear brain.

She loved West Livermore with all her heart. That she did not try to gainsay. And she barely respected Albert Smiley. He was good enough as far as morals went, but he was conceited, foppish, egotistical, and shallow, while West was large minded, unselfish, broad souled, and manly. Albert was sickly, and consumptive, while West was glowing with health and vigor. Albert admired her, and wanted her to do the honors of his splendid home, and West loved her with all the passion of an ardent nature, and wanted her for his wife—the bride of his bosom, the sharer of his innermost life. But Albert could give her wealth, splendor, luxury, could dress her in costly robes, and send her about the world, and West could give her but a humble home—a poor dress, and she could never shine in society again. You must remember that this girl had been brought up in ease, and idleness that she knew nothing of life without plenty of money and a stylish wardrobe, and then perhaps you will not wonder, that after weighing her two proposals carefully, she sat down and answered Albert Smiley's letter—in the affirmative.

"I have received your letter," she wrote, "and will answer your request by saying that I will be your wife. You are not expecting any sentimental devotion, or demonstrative affection from me, doubtless, as it is not my nature I presume you have discovered, and therefore you will not be disappointed. I am coming home next week, when I shall expect to meet you, and listen to your plans for the future."

And then she threw herself, dressed, upon the outside of her bed, and wept herself to sleep.

Perhaps Albert Smiley might have thought it was in Miss Haskell's nature to be demonstrative, had he seen her the following evening, when West Livermore pressed her for her answer.

They were standing on the vine shaded porch in the gloaming, and he told her that he wanted his answer, wanted to know his fate. She turned and looked him full in the face; she put both hands upon his shoulders. "Kiss me," she said, "kiss me once before I tell you, for you will not want to then."

He drew her fiercely to his breast, divining what was to come. He held her and kissed her, while she clung to him, shivering and sobbing.

"Yesterday" she said, leaning her face against his shoulder. "I received a proposal of marriage by letter, from a man I have known some years. I do not love him—I scarcely respect him. Yet last evening I wrote an acceptance of his offer. Oh, West, I love you, love you, but I cannot give up wealth, position, ease, and pleasure for love. I *must* have riches, and I feel that I could not be contented as a farmer's wife. God knows I struggled hard to decide aright, but my heart cries out against my decision when I look in your dear face."

He had waited very still and quiet, till she finished. She was yet in his arms, leaning against his shoulder.

"Where is the letter you wrote?" he asked.

"It went out on the afternoon train," she made answer. "I posted it before breakfast."

"For fear you might wish to change your mind if the letter remained in your hands, I suppose," he said quietly putting her gently but firmly away from him. "God bless you, Laura, but I think we could have been happy together."

Her face was turned away from him. She was looking at a flickering light in the upper room of Mr. Graeme's house. "West," she said softly, "were you ever Annie Graeme's lover?"

"Never," he answered. "I never spoke one word of love to her, though I cared more for her than for any other woman, until you came. She is a sweet, gentle girl, but I never loved any woman but you."

"Well, Annie Graeme loves you, West, and I think you will be happy after I go away. I am not worthy such love. I must go home day after to-morrow."

He turned to go, but came back and drew her to his heart again. "Oh, Laura," he cried, "must we part when I love you so?"

"Yes, we must part, though I love you so. It is better so, West. Good-bye I, shall never love again—but you will."

Two days later Miss Haskell took her departure. Annie Graeme saw her go with a strange feeling at her heart. She heard her bid her aunt good-bye, heard her say to Amanda—"Good-bye, Amanda, remember and send me the wedding cards, and I will return the compliment, one of these days, maybe."

Annie cast a quick glance at West, but his face was gloomy, his eyes turned sullenly to the clouds. He stepped forward last of all. "Good-bye, Miss Haskell," he said, "may peace and prosperity follow you all the days of your life."

Then he walked briskly away, leaving her and his mother and Amanda to watch the train off, and drive home.

"Poor West," Amanda said, as they drove home, "he got singed, in the flame, I suppose."

"Poor Laura," responded Mrs. Livermore, "she was singed quite as badly as West, I think, but had not the strength to follow her heart's desires. Well, I do not think she would be very happy as a farmer's wife."

West was gloomy and blue in the days that followed, scarcely speaking to any one. But in the early winter they heard him singing "Annie Laurie" again, and his eyes wandered over to the light in Mr. Graeme's window. He was thinking of Annie Graeme and wondering if it was worth while to mope his life away over a sordid woman's lack of heart and strength. And, while he sat there thinking and planning for a happier life, the bells were pealing a marriage chime in a city far away, and a fair, pale bride was giving her hand, but not her heart, to a pale, narrow-chested groom, and promising to love, honor and obey. But all the time her heart was back on the old farm with West Livermore.

The years went by, till twelve had rolled down into the vault of the past since the summer of which I have written.

Down the old lane a carriage, drawn by two mottled bays, passed on its way. It was August, and the harvesters were at work in the fields; the reapers clicked and clashed through the grain, the binders bound the golden sheaves, and sang and whistled at their work.

The two ladies who occupied the carriage looked with interest upon the scene. One was an elderly lady, with the thin, consumptive figure of her brother, Albert Smiley. The other was a woman of thirty-six; pale, fair, refined, dressed with taste and elegance, but looking out upon the harvest scene with such sad, sad dark eyes.

"There is the house," she said, pointing to the old brown farmhouse that was empty and deserted. There was where I spent my summer. Deserted now, you see, and that elegant white house has taken its place as a residence, evidently. Poor aunty is dead. Amanda lives miles away, and West and Annie live there in the white house, I suppose. All is changed. We will just stop at the gate, Maggie, and tie the horses, and I will run in and see if Annie lives here."

The elderly lady accompanied her to the door and tapped lightly. A gentle-faced girl of some nine or ten summers came to the door, and the younger lady, whom we know to be Laura Smiley, asked if Westley Livermore resided there; but before the girl could reply, a blooming matron came from an adjoining room and smiled upon them, asking them to walk in and be seated.

Laura took a step forward. "Annie," she said, "can it be you have forgotten Laura Haskell—now Mrs. Smiley?" she cried. "Can it be you, after all these years?" kissing her, half-laughing, half-crying. Laura introduced her sister-in-law, and then the two—Annie and Laura—fell to talking of old times.

Annie showed her the house, all nicely finished and furnished, and opened every door to give her a peep within. "And this is my girl," she said, kissing the gentle-faced child with motherly pride. "She is like me, is she not, or as I used to be? But my boys are like their father, all three of them. They have his blue eyes and golden hair, and handsome features."

"All three?" echoed Laura. "Can it be possible you have three boys?"

"Yes—the youngest is but two months old. Just look at him asleep here in his crib. Is he not lovely?"

Laura looked, and pressed a warm kiss upon the pink face of the lovely babe, while a sigh shook her breast.

"And now tell me about yourself," Annie said. "Your husband and children are at home, I suppose."

"My husband is travelling for his health," Laura answered. "He is very poorly, and has gone to Europe, hoping to return better. I was there only two years ago, and did not care to go again. I have no children—my only babe lived but two short weeks, and suffered terribly that length of time. My sister lives with me while Albert is abroad, and we proposed a drive into the country last week, and as we were but twenty miles from here to-day, I could not resist the temptation to visit the old place. No, we cannot stop, we promised to spend the night with a friend ten miles from here. We really have lingered too long already."

And no persuasion could induce Laura to stop to tea. She would not have met West Livermore for the world.

They bade farewell to pleasant, matronly Mrs. Livermore, and rode back by the fields of harvesters.

A few rods from the house they came upon a three-year-old boy, sitting on the grass near the harvest field, watching the reaper go round, with his dreamy blue eyes. Laura put her hand upon the reins. "Hold up a moment," she said; and then leaning from the carriage, "Little boy, will you come and kiss me?" she asked.

The child lifted his blue eyes wonderingly to the gentle, pale face, and then came toward the carriage. She leaned out and took him in her arms, hugging him to her breast, and raining kisses upon his golden hair and ruby lips.

"What is your name, little one?" she asked, and he lisped "West Liv-mo."

And then she kissed him again and again, with tears in her eyes, and put him down upon the grass and bade her sister drive on.

"How Laura longs for children!" thought her sister-in-law. "She loves them so, it is too bad she is childless."

Yes, Laura loved children, but her sister never dreamed that those kisses were given because it was the child of West Livermore, and because he had his father's eyes and hair. Ah, Laura! was yours a wise choice when you decided between your lovers?

☞ A Western juvenile, who bears the burden of thirteen long summers on his shoulders with most refreshing confidence was served with a moderate allowance of dessert, one day, at the dinner-table; but the quantity was decidedly below his notions of justice or reason, as he evinced with a contemptuous curl of the lip, and the dry observation to his maternal: "Did you put this here for the flies?" It is unnecessary to add that he was supplied with another installment, as he deserved to be.

☞ A gentleman was talking to a friend, in the presence of his attorney, about the value of honesty. "*Honesty!*" said the attorney; "what is *honesty?*" "What is that to *you?*" retorted the gentleman; "don't meddle with things which don't concern you!"

☞ Two colored brothers, Henry Rollins and Levi Griffin, were working on the levee in Memphis, when the former rolled a bale of cotton down from a tier eight bales high upon the latter, effectually extinguishing an old grudge between them. Rollins was arrested and confessed to this novel method of taking off his enemy.

☞ All the remaining servants of George Washington are expected to attend the centennial celebration in one body, with a becoming escort.

☞ A San Francisco restaurant-keeper has got himself into disgrace just by being detected in serving up gulls, as quails, on toast.

☞ An Ohio man attached a medal to an eagle's neck and set him at liberty, with much ceremony, on Washington's birthday. Two days later the proud bird made a descent on a farmer's sheep-pen, and his brief career was ignominiously brought to a close by a charge of buckshot.

☞ A lady, showing a friend the photograph of herself and husband, was told that the gentleman's was much the better likeness. "Yes, my dear," she answered; "but then you know that men are so easy to catch."

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ A true American is too proud to beg and too honest to steal. He gets trusted.

☞ "Give me none of your jaw," as the filbert said to the man.

☞ Why do ladies have to replenish their wardrobe so often? Because their new clothes are sure to be *worn out* as soon as they get them.

☞ A justice at Vernon, Iowa, wound up a marriage by saying: "And I now send you to the county jail for thirty days." He was thinking of another case.

☞ Here is philanthropy for you. A good-natured Danbury man has broken in 165 pairs of boots for friends during the last ten years.

☞ Among the funny conversations uttered at a concert recently, was this, a young lady being the speaker: "We had a sleighing party last night; everybody was so nice, and we were all so comfortable; the sleigh was made for only four, and there were six of us."

☞ Dear Girl.—We met Miss Kitty—at a ball recently. After talking about the balloon ascension, the weather and other things, we asked rather abruptly: "Where is your mother?" "Oh," said the sweet damsel, "I have left her at home. I generally do when I come to a ball. What is home without a mother?"

☞ Darwin says that infants do not know how to weep until they are several days old. We don't know whether he can prove the statement or not; but there are a good many happy fathers who will give him all they possess in the world if he will prove that infants don't know how to howl.

☞ A New York paper accounts for the number of centenarians dying in Philadelphia, by saying that "when people have become so old in other places that they are utterly wearied of life, they move to Philadelphia, knowing that if anything will finish them, that will."

☞ Mr. Sherman, of Yuba, has to hire a man to keep the eagles from interviewing his lambs.

☞ A wasp with a yellow bustle is no insignificant agent in dispersing a crowd, but a nervous woman making through a crowd for the cars, with a valise in one hand and an umbrella in the other, is about as appalling an object as the human mind could conceive and maintain its balance.

☞ The New York "Mail" tells us that a favorite hotel is to be kept this season at one of the watering places "by the widow of Mr. ——, who died last summer on a new and improved plan." The old, old fashion that Dickens talked so mournfully about has been superceded we suppose.

☞ Would you rather go through a giddy waltz with a pretty girl, than go through a pretty waltz with a giddy girl? We pause for a reply.

☞ The Griffin (Georgia) Register says of the death of Mr. Grafton, of that place: "He was a fine man in all respects; he was owing us seven dollars on that last game of seven-up, but we will throw that in toward his head-stone."

☞ A western reporter speaks thus of a lecture: "We thought of it at times as a majestic crystal, brilliant in its noble bulk, and radiating from innumerable lines, facts, philosophy, poetry, ethics, and religion." If he thought this at times, it would be interesting to know what he thought of it at other times.

☞ A kirk luminary recently asked his pet scholar, why they took Stephen outside the walls of the city to stone him to death. The little fellow was silent for a moment, as though absorbed with the problem, when, brightening up suddenly, he replied, "So they could get a better shot at him."

☞ There was a fight between Danbury and Norwalk roosters in this place, Friday. The pain every good citizen must feel over such a brutal display, is somewhat modified by the fact that our rooster licked.—*Danbury News.*

☞ Modern medical science has discovered that little children, even infants, suffer more than has been supposed from rheumatism, and now a New York physician declares that they frequently die of apoplexy. But not to be outdone by others, a Titusville, Pennsylvania, doctor declares that old age carries off more babies than cholera.

☞ A Lansingburgh, New York, man, thinking he was about to die, endeavored to get a promise from his young wife that she would never marry again. The lady hesitated a long time, but finally gave her husband's anxious heart partial ease by saying, "I will promise not to marry more than I can help."

☞ A ten-year old, boasting to his schoolmate of his father's accomplishments, put it thus: "My father can do almost anything. He's a notary public, and he's a 'pothecary, and can pull teeth, and he's a horse-doctor, and he can mend wagons and things, and he can play the fiddle, and he's a jackass at all trades."

☞ The Chicago Post thinks that a young lady in this State who is said to have injured her health by hard study, must have been trying to read one of the Courier-Journal's editorials. That she still lives is the best evidence in the world that she was not trying to read one of the Post's editorials.—*Courier Journal.*

☞ A dramatic critic overheard a gentleman observe to another in a stall at the theatre: "Look at that painted old woman; old and parched as she is, they say that she can still turn men's heads." "Yes; but the other way," was the reply.

☞ Titusville has a fire police. They paraded the other day in uniform, which, according to the Courier, consists of a cap, a belt and a club. Rather light marching order for the season, isn't it?

☞ The maddest man in Camden is Smith. He wound up his clock regularly every night for fifteen years, and then discovered it was an eight-day clock. He muses on the work that he might have done in those wasted minutes, and his anger is dreadful.

☞ The mournful foundering of a Mississippi steamboat, is thus described by an eye-witness:

> "She hove and sot, and sot and hove,
> And high her rudder flung;
> And every time she hove and sot
> A water leak she sprung."

☞ A malicious libel is going the rounds that vegetation is so scarce at Cape Cod that two mullen stalks and a whortleberry bush are called a grove. The truth is that unless there are three whortleberry bushes they never think of saying grove.

MRS. H. A. HARLOW, of Florida, N. Y., has had a Grover & Baker Machine in use for thirteen years, and did not expend one cent for repairs, excepting for a new circular needle.

☞ In his book on Chronic Diseases Dr. Pierce says of his Golden Medical Discovery:

"God, I believe, has instilled into the roots and plants from which this wonderful medicine is extracted, the healing properties, by the use of which Consumption, the scourge of the human family, may in its early stages be promptly arrested and permanently cured. I do not wish to delude, flatter and then disappoint the afflicted by asserting that this can be accomplished when the lungs are half consumed, as many do who, being devoid of all conscience, aim to humbug the afflicted, that they may sell their often worse than worthless compounds. But if my *Golden Medical Discovery* is employed in the first or early stages of the disease, I know from ample observation and actual tests in hundreds of cases that it will arrest the disease and restore health and strength." 8t6

SICKNESS is an affliction that waits on us all. None are exempt, and there are none but need relief from its attacks. Whoever can furnish this becomes our benefactor. A conviction prevails that DR. AYER does it. Disorders of the blood have been healed by his SARSAPARILLA, and affections of the lungs by his CHERRY PECTORAL, too frequently and too distinctly to be disputed. His AGUE CURE is said, by those who use it, to never fail. Reader, if you must have medical aid, take the best of medicine. Poor remedies are dear, as good are cheap, at any price you have to pay for them.—*Charleston Courier.*

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PROSPECTUS FOR 1873.

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By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "An Everyday Heroine," etc.

A NOVELET.
By Miss FANNIE HODGSON, author of "Kathleen's Love Story," "Raeburn," etc. [Miss Hodgson's Novelet will run through the whole year.]

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☞ No deviation allowed from our regular terms. If less money is sent, the paper will be sent for a proportionate period.

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We are happy to say that we received the second edition of our Premium Chromo, "Little Samuel," last week, and mailed them at once to every subscriber who was entitled to them.

We have now a goodly supply on hand, and are prepared to fill all new orders without a day's delay.

LETTERS FROM ZIG.

A NOBLE WOMAN.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

The intelligent and sensible lady readers of THE POST, who have not had, and will not have, an opportunity of seeing her, will be glad to read something about her, I am sure. She seems to me almost the bravest, brightest, truest and best woman I ever saw in my life.

She is Miss Emily Faithfull, the champion of the English working woman.

She is not one of those very uncomfortable people who have a mission. She is simply an untiring worker for working women. It is strange how it comes about, too, for Miss Faithfull is a daughter of the blue blood of England, and the traditional "sphere" of women of her rank is usually so far above the class of poor English working-women, as the seventh heaven of Mahomet is above that last, lowest hell which he makes to put hypocrites in. Emily Faithfull must have been born with some outlandish radical crook or twist in her disposition, which made her take to good works naturally. I can't tell you how glad I was to read that she was a very naughty little girl. I'm sick of good little girls. Small females who take to sewing by hand, and never covet preserves, and always mind their mothers, are most intolerable bores. I can't abide 'em! There is never a particle of snap about 'em, either as girls or women. No, indeed! Give us the naughty little girls forever and ever. When they come to be women, they are the back-bone of the human race. So I wasn't at all surprised to read that Emily Faithfull was a real naughty little girl, an indomitable rebel from the time she could stand alone. They used to tie up her head in her apron, and make her stand in the corner, for naughtiness, whereupon she would bite holes in her apron, to see out of, and turn around and face the whole family crowd as defiantly as Lord Marmion when burned his swarthy cheek with fire because Douglass wouldn't shake hands with him. And once this naughty little girl climbed a wall twenty feet high and ran away from school. How I do glory in her! Such a strong, hearty will of her own as she had, so different from the sick little milksops of girls who are always "good!"

As Emily Faithful became older, her stubborn, wayward will developed grandly into a ceaseless, heroic energy in good works for the destitute of her own sex. She has undoubtedly done more for the cause of working women than any other one person, dead or alive, ever did.

About fifteen years ago, she says in one of her powerful lectures, having been gradually incited thereto by the destitute, deplorable condition of so many thousands of worthy English working women, she resolved henceforward to do what she might to ameliorate this deplorable condition. She has a sort of employment office in London where hundreds of applications for work are made every day. The impossibility of providing for all, or even half these needy women, set her to thinking more profoundly and earnestly than ever about women's work and wages. It came to her that something *must* be done to widen the field of employment for women. The difficulties in her way were appalling, especially the almost insurmountable one of "no opening on the one side, and no training on the other." But our brave lady set herself to the task, and worked like a steam engine. She never knows an idle moment. Her steadfast perseverance and glorious singleness of purpose are simply a grand inspiration to women who have sense enough to read the lesson.

In 1860 she established a printing house, the Victoria Press, where only women are employed as compositors. It was little else than a failure at first, as might have been expected, but Miss Faithful stood by it and fought its battle, and made it successful. It is now a flourishing business house. Queen Victoria appointed Miss Faithfull "Printer and Publisher in ordinary to her Majesty." In 1863 Emily Faithfull began to publish a monthly journal called the Victoria Magazine, a very valuable publication, devoted mostly to the interests of working women. She is one of the most indefatigable workers upon earth. She says that what has been accomplished in the matter of women's work and wages seems discouragingly little until she compares it with what the condition of poor women used to be, and then the progress seems to be immense. She comes to this country in a sort of semi-official capacity, mostly to inquire into the status of working women here, particularly the women, as well as the children, employed in factories. She thinks America is in advance of England on the woman question.

With all her labors, she finds time to make her beautiful English home one of the pleasantest social centres in the land.

A peculiarity of her receptions is that she brings together on exactly equal terms, people of all ranks in life, from the lowest to the highest. This must seem very queer in the stiff and solemn old country where Thackeray says: "Lordolatry is part of our creed, and our children are brought up to respect the Peerage as the Englishman's second Bible."

Americans are warmly welcomed at Miss Faithfull's home in England, therefore it is not surprising that Miss Faithfull should be enthusiastically received in America, both for her cause, and for her worthy, gifted self. Charles Dickens himself was not more enthusiastically welcomed than Emily Faithfull has been in many places. The splendid reception given her at Steinway Hall was one of the most superb affairs of the kind ever witnessed in America. I tell you I do feel so proud of this grand woman. She is not "pretty," though she is large and noble-looking. A woman with so many other attractions has no need to be pretty. "Pretty" would be out of place on her. But there is that about her which is infinitely more than pretty. A gentleman of my acquaintance, who dislikes most of the women agitator exceedingly, was charmed with Emily Faithfull in three minutes. I don't know how to tell you, but she is at once so sweet and powerful, so womanly and so heroic, that she would inspire a very churl with infinite respect for her and her cause.

I had the supreme pleasure of hearing one of her lectures. Of course, I went to the one on the Woman Question, because that is the subject which lies nearest to my heart of anything on this earth. I couldn't hear all she said, because some shallow women right behind me kept up an infernal jabber the whole time of this fine lecture, talking about some woman in a striped shawl, criticising Miss Faithfull's clothes, and speculating about what sort of a dress she had on. Poor little fools! I do get so enraged at women, sometimes.

Miss Faithfull said in the beginning of her lecture that the Woman Question was really but little understood, although everybody thought himself fully confident to pronounce judgment on it. There are about three millions of women who have to work for their bread in England. Think of that, dear friends, men and woman; as many women as the whole population of the State of Ohio, dependent directly on themselves for bread. It is time indeed that women's occupations were widened, and their wages increased. Miss Faithful says that it is simply cruelty to tell these women that their place is at home, attending to their husbands and children, when they have neither homes nor husbands, and no hope of ever getting any. How gladly the poor souls would take the homes and husbands, and thank God for 'em, only there are no homes or husbands for them in this world. They must work at some trade or die. And the number of destitute women is constantly increasing, both in England and America.

Miss Faithfull declares, what is the gospel truth, and every honest mind will admit it, that men have invaded "woman's sphere" till they have absolutely driven her out of it, and left her almost nothing which she can gain her living at. Formerly all the spinning and weaving of the world was a part of woman's sphere. That was one method, and a highly important one, by which poor women gained their bread. Now it is all done by machinery, and the men invariably get the best paid part of it. Formerly baking and brewing were exclusively woman's work. Now men have reared great factories for both these, and do all the work and get all the money. Nay, men have taken the very knitting and sewing away from women. Masculine invention has invaded all the domestic departments, and men have driven women out of their sphere. In God's name, then, give women all the variety of employment they can get; let them fill all the places they can fill, and train them as men are trained. As to the saying that woman was made for man, Miss Faithfull said it reminded her of the profound observation of an old gentleman that rivers were beneficently created by God Almighty for the purpose of feeding canals! No. Woman was not made for man, any more than man was made for woman. "The woman's cause is the man's. They rise or fall together."

Finally, with reference to the woman question, with reference to all other questions which concern the weal or woe of mankind, let us say, in the words of one of Emily Faithfull's beautiful sentences: "No man or woman ever yet worked honestly without bringing some good to the human race."

ZIG.

SHAMS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY GLEN CAROL.

How this great, gay world of ours is crowded, packed full, round and round, brimming over, literally, with shams!—Everything in art and nature too has been imitated, copied, shammed, until we may consider ourselves wise indeed if we come in time to discern the difference between the imitation and the genuine, the real and unreal. Society has its shams, is teeming with them—and unfortunately, though none the less truly, home has them also. The "Sweet Home" which poets have sung, and homeless ones dreamed of, is not always the abiding-place above all earthly possessions to be coveted. Too often, in fact, it is a spot where ill-temper, contention, and unhappiness reign.

Truly happy homes are the exception, not the rule. But let the skeleton grin never so ghastly, and pursue its victims never so daringly from room to room at home—it is abject, servile, cringing when they overstep the threshold. Of the tears that fell hot and heavy so little time ago there is left no trace. Who would carry a tear-stained face to meet the laughing, questioning world? Or bring a heart full of private griefs and domestic troubles to scatter broadcast among society—*tender* society—at large? Would you say that this light, laughing face before you had paled and quivered with anger or wretchedness an hour agone? Or that the hands clasping your own so cordially, bore yet the impress of the small nails where the poor fingers had interlocked and clenched themselves in helpless despair?

Verily, we know not whom we meet, nor what they are! There are some things better hidden than revealed.

Let each be content to know what his own mask hides, nor seek to lift his neighbor's!

NOT YOUR FAULT.

It was not your fault, my darling,
For you thought that your love was mine;
I was a child and you my prince,
But I loved you then, as ever since,
With a love that was near divine.

It was not your fault, my darling,
That the shadows would come between;
I lacked the charm of a pretty face,
I could not vie with the studied grace
Of the others whom you had seen.

It was not your fault, my darling,
That your passion should prove so strong;
My girlish lips could never speak,
My faith so great, my love so weak,
I could not link your name with wrong.

It was not your fault, my darling,
That you so tired and careless grew;
Your manhood found another love,
Your worship flew to the one above,
And I still will deem you brave and true.

It was not your fault, my darling,
That your feet should come no more.
My life is dead, my heart is broke;
You never fulfilled the vows you spoke,
Though you plighted them o'er and o'er.

It was not your fault, my darling,
That the world grows bleak and drear,
That I wait for your ringing, manly tread,
That I long for the glorious dream now fled,
That your tender tones I may never hear.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST:—A little paragraph going the rounds of the press catches the eye of every reader, and no doubt has caught yours. It is to the effect that a young lady is confined in the lunatic asylum on Blackwell's Island, who, for two years and a half, has persistently refused to utter a syllable; that her lunacy was caused by disappointed love, and that a certain day every year a young gentleman enters the asylum, places a bouquet in her hand, and silently disappears.

Very pretty, isn't it?

It is strange how much one learns from the daily prints.

Now it was my good fortune to see this young lady some two years ago, and what troubles me is, that the reporters, so long as they were intending to give the story to the public, did not do it then, for in the party who accompanied me upon that visit to Pandemonium were at least half a dozen shining literary lights. My attention, upon that occasion, was first attracted by the sweet, pensive beauty of the young face. I thought her a child, at first sight, and she could not at that time have been over seventeen years of age. She was slightly built, but had no look of emaciation or ill-health. She was standing at one side of the long hall, in which were congregated some fifty or more female lunatics, of the *harmless* order (if there is any such thing,) who had come out of their cells, or sleeping-rooms, for their morning exercise; some slowly promenading, paying no heed to surroundings, some exhorting, some praying, some gayly chatting, some waltzing, and more begging of the visitors to take some message for them to the outside world, that their friends might know where to seek them.

Amid it all, the young girl stood silent, and appeared to notice naught that was transpiring. I approached and spoke kindly to her, and she turned upon me the sweetest blue eyes I ever beheld, but made no reply, nor did she appear to have heard my remark.

A speechless woman is at any time an object of interest, and a speechless lunatic is a still greater, and, my curiosity excited, I appealed to a "keeper," or a "doctor," or some official, whose business it is to know the private history of all the inmates, to tell me something of the fair girl, for really I had my doubts about her being in the least insane.

The story as I got it then was, that she was the daughter of a wealthy widower, and had been placed at the Convent of the Sacred Heart to be educated. That in true school-girl fashion, she had formed an "undying attachment" for a young Miss of nearly her own age, and the two were inseparable. This intimacy was looked upon by the "Sisters" as something quite right and pretty, and she was permitted to accompany her friend to her home in Brooklyn, and spend the holidays with her. This was all very well; but unfortunately there was a brother in the case, and after a few visits he began to see beauty in the young face, and to build air-castles, and, in a word, fell desperately in love, and longed earnestly for the time when the girl's education should be completed, and she should no more be under the watchful supervision of the nuns.

But the course of true love never did run smooth, and in this case the beautiful girl was quite indifferent to the blandishments of the stylish Adolphe, and never once dreamed that he had a different love for her than that manifested for his young sister. So, when he one day whispered something of his state of mind in her wondering ear, she was, as a matter of course, quite shocked and bewildered, and after giving him a respectful "No, sir," ran blushing and frightened to the sister and told her all about it, who, in turn, communicated it to the parents, who had other views for their "first-born;" and the result was, that before her visit was half over, she was bundled back to school, and forbidden all intercourse with the family. This was a grievous shock, for her love for her friend was sincere and earnest, and for a long time she mourned, refusing to be comforted, and seemed to sink into a sort of melancholy, from which nothing could arouse her. The kind Sisters, wishing to do all in their power to entertain and enliven the unhappy girl, permitted her to ramble outside the grounds; and in one of her walks she was accosted by a handsome, stylish chap, who made himself very agreeable, and chatted and laughed with her until she quite forgot her trouble; and as days went by, and the man continued to *accidentally* meet her every time she ventured out for a stroll, she became in appearance quite her former self, while for the first time in her young life she learned to love.

It was all wrong of course, so long as the young fellow was an utter stranger, and did not even try to convince her that he was all her fancy painted him, but the poor child was lonely and inexperienced and never of very strong mind, I am inclined to believe, and life and love were beautiful to her, and when the tempter urged her to leave her safe home and the good sisters, and go forth with him as his honored wife, she thought it was a most romantic thing to do, and then she loved him so, and her father would forgive her when he found she had married a truly good man, and she should float through life on a rose-colored cloud, and be so very, very happy. Accordingly in true story style she stole away from the convent, entered the carriage in waiting, was clasped in the arms of the devoted lover, driven somewhere and married, and like all other happy couples, they started at once for Philadelphia and the Continental Hotel. For one week she was the happiest girl in the whole world, then, the whilom husband coolly informed her that she had been a very great idiot, that he was the husband of another woman, and the father of two children, and that the marriage ceremony between them was a sham, and the best thing she could do would be to return to the "sisters" and if questioned to say nothing. The next morning she was found wandering in the streets of New York, quiet, but mindless, and to all questionings as dumb as though her lips had been forever sealed. Her father learning the facts refused to receive her, and she was sent to the asylum, where she remains month after month, the same look of pensiveness upon her sweet face, but not a word to indicate that she sees or comprehends that she is part and parcel of a living, breathing world.

The young man who brings "flowers, fresh flowers," and places them in her cold listless hand, is the Brooklyn chap, who blames himself for the whole trouble, and who still loves her, and clings to the hope that time will bring healing on its wings, and that some day the strange malady will leave her and he can then renew his suit with strong hopes of success.

The father has sworn eternal vengeance on the brute who wrecked his daughter's peace, but he has thus far eluded him, and will probably continue to do so.

I have often thought of that strange story, and many a time has the memory of the fair girl sitting pale and speechless looking into vacancy, come back to me; but so full of stories is that old stone prison, that one listens to them with never a thought of placing them upon paper.

FASHIONS

are not very plenty—new ones, I mean. Veils floating in the air high above the reach of their owners are frequently seen, and gentlemen's hats and umbrellas scudding across streets and under stages, and finally coming to a dead halt in a mud puddle, are every day sights. March is not a favorite month with fashionables, and with its high winds and browning proclivities, no one can wonder.

"Openings" we have every day almost, but the new spring suits and fresh hats and bonnets do not yet make their appearance on the promenade. A few days and April all "smiles and tears" will be with us, and then we shall see what we shall see.

OLIVE KING.

OUT IN THE COLD.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

Down the bleak street, in the swift-fallen snow,
Wanders a woman with nowhere to go.
White is her face as she stops in the light,
Oh! would to God that her soul were as white!
Wild are her eyes as she breathes unaware
Words that her Saviour may deem as a prayer.
Ah! but the tale of her grief is soon told—
Homeless and friendless, and out in the cold.

Out in the cold! But the cold of the street
Is not the cold that she dreads most to meet.
Hearts that are colder she finds every day,
Turning her prayers and entreaties away,
Scorning to speak to a sinner like her,
Hearts cold as theirs are her woes cannot stir.
Ah! but the wolf of destruction is bold—
Homeless and friendless, and out in the cold.

Women and men, as you turn her aside,
Think you, I pray, of the Saviour who died!
Was it for sinners he clung to His cross?
Oh! in your hearts there is bitterest dross!
Heat up the crucible, cold fellow-man,
With the warm fires of God's love, if you can;
Purge out the dross that corrupts all the gold,
And help the poor creatures who're out in the cold.

HOME AND SOCIETY.

SENSIBLE SOCIAL GATHERINGS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Most persons, over thirty years of age, vote the attending of evening parties "a decided bore," and determine to keep as far away from them as possible. And this is not because we do not enjoy meeting our friends in society, for by nature most of us are gregarious, and delight in the interchange of visits, and the like. And it is not because we detest the work of preparation, for ladies, at least, well know that a becoming evening attire makes them none the less attractive and charming; and even a gentleman is improved in appearance when he dons the black, evening dress-coat, with a faultless collar, necktie, and a vest of the most stylish shape.

But dancing, and empty small talk, and a late supper, do not possess sufficient attractions to persons of average intelligence, after the glow of youth has passed away. Dancing is too tiresome an exercise for most of us middle-aged folk; and with no common topics of interest, it is not surprising that many learned and able gentlemen fail to make themselves entertaining to the ladies, and *vice versa*.

Of course, there are congenial friends who, if they are fortunate enough to meet together socially, will pass a most enjoyable evening; and then they are surprised to think that society has been such a terrible bore to them heretofore, and that they have been so reluctant to accept the invitations of their friends.

Perhaps while the remembrance of their pleasure lasts they venture out again; but, alas! the next visit proves such an utter failure, when compared with the first one, that they mentally resolve that they will never endure such an infliction again. Card-parties are very agreeable to those who enjoy that pastime; but there are men and women who possess souls above cards, and can only wonder how Mrs. A., Mr. B., Mrs. C. and Mr. D. *can* amuse themselves with such bits of painted pasteboard and counters.

Now, we do not decry cards—not at all—for we enjoy a scientific game of whist, a lively hand at euchre, or an arithmetical game at cribbage, with its constant repetition of "fifteen-two, fifteen-four, fifteen-six, and a pair, a sequence and a flush," very much. But we have attended more enjoyable gatherings, and it is the desire to describe some of them to our readers which has prompted us to write this article.

For the two years past, a company of friends, in a small country place, have passed one evening in the week, most pleasantly, by attending a "*Call and See Us Club*," which is not a party, nor a "Society," but simply a call, or we may style it a reception, if it so please you.

The members of this *Club* agree to receive each other one evening in every week at their respective homes. The gathering is entirely informal; no party dresses, white kids, or the like, are allowed, but afternoon dresses are *en regle*; and at half-past seven, P. M., the lady of the house is prepared to receive her guests. They are not expected to ring the bell, unless latch-keys are in use; and they come, as it were, to make an evening call—but lay aside their outer wraps.

When all are assembled, conversation is enjoyed for half an hour; and then the hostess produces some sketch of a great man's life, or of a foreign country, or some simple yet moving tale, and it is read aloud by one of the company. The ladies knit, crochet or tat at their own sweet will, or sit with folded hands.

Between nine and ten o'clock slight refreshments are served, such as coffee, rolls, tongue or ham and cake, and the guests are usually invited out into the dining-room.

After supper a short poem, or some amusing extracts from Dickens, Thackeray, or some other renowned novelist are read; and by eleven the visitors depart, having passed a most enjoyable evening; and they are refreshed and strengthened by the pleasant, unrestrained, social intercourse, which, sneer as we will at evening parties, is still so essential for a good understanding among a circle of acquaintances and friends.

Boys and girls over fifteen years old are allowed to come if they please, and if their parents will receive the "*Club*" at their homes; but children are the exception rather than the chief object of the gathering, which was started by a lady who felt a special need of social intercourse.

About a dozen families are invited to join the "*Club*," and each family is expected to receive the friends in turn. These little pleasant social meetings have become a decided success, and have done away with a great deal of formality in the small town we allude to.

Of course there are those who are offended at not being included in the membership; but in such a gathering all cannot be included. It must be confined to a few friends, and those selected from an intimate neighborhood. One bachelor lawyer of eighty years, who is in the highest state of preservation and can always make himself agreeable, is an honored guest at every meeting, and enjoys them with all the zest of a man of thirty years.

The refreshments are to be of as simple a character as the hostess chooses to offer; but it was deemed advisable to offer *something*, because the act of partaking of a little food breaks up the stiffness of every circle. Instinctively we become more jolly when we taste a delicious cup of coffee, a tempting roll and a tender bit of ham or tongue; and deny it as we may, we are often forced to declare with Dr. Wolcot's "Peter Pindar," that

"The turnpike road to people's hearts I find
Lies through their mouths, or I mistake mankind."

In summer these "*Clubs*" need not be discontinued, but they can be held once a fortnight, instead of once a week.

Now there is no reason why we middle-aged folk should retire from society, and leave *all* the amusements to young persons. We need to keep our wits bright by an interchange of thought with each other, and when we advance in maturity and earnestness of purpose, we should provide entertainments suitable to our tastes, and not attend those where young persons most do congregate.

It is as natural for young folks to dance as for lambs to skip, and the quadrille is a lovely sight—we cannot say as much for the "round dances"—but doubtless that is owing to our prejudices, and never being able to waltz ourselves

"In the merry, merry days when we were young."

For the spinning motion disturbed our brains, and the giddiness which ensued could not be prevented. And when a little older grown, we ask for other amusements.

The "*Ladies' Club*" of Boston, styled in derision the "*Brains' Club*," was founded upon this need. The ladies of that city felt the want of a different kind of entertainment than that afforded by evening parties then in vogue, so a few of them started this "*Club*." Its members are elected by ballot, and each lady received in the "*Club*," must send out invitations to all its members, and each member must either decline or accept. If some decline, the hostess can invite outside guests to fill their places; and if the husband cannot escort his wife, she can bring a gentleman escort, but not a lady friend. Some kind of sensible entertainment is provided by the hostess, such as dramatic representations, tableaux, statuary, Mrs. Jarley's wax-works, recitations, readings, or singing and instrumental music.

If the hostess chooses she can hire operatic singers and concert players wherewith to entertain her guests. Quite an elaborate supper usually follows such entertainments.

DAISY EYEBRIGHT.

LOVE VS. AGENTS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY DAISY BURNS.

"Oh, ho, ho," said Miss Abigail Smith, laying down her paper and looking into the fire, "if ever truth was written, it is written right there," meaning the paper of course; "if there is any particular folks I hate, it is agents." You see, Miss Abigail had been reading that remarkably good article of Zig's on sewing-machine agents. "And," continued Miss Abigail, "I've a right to hate them, the pesky things—yes, and if the good Lord hadn't have blessed me with so many amiable qualities, a good forgiving nature among them, I'd have broken a dozen or so broomsticks over some of their heads before now—just for revenge. If it hadn't been for them I'd have been a happy wife now instead of an old maid of forty. Here's Jane Smith, my cousin, just my age, and one of the happiest wives and mothers living. And I—well, I'm an old maid—but I stay at home, mind my own business, and am very content.

"Yes, those agents have caused it all. I loved a man once—yes—and only one man in all my forty years of existence. Jackson Hart was his name, but we always called him Jack. He was a fine-looking, industrious, upright man; and everybody knew what Jack Hart said, he meant. Ah, me, it has been so long ago. Well, well—as the poet says:

"'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all.'

"'Twas just such a day as this—twenty years ago—just think; I was then a blooming girl of twenty. I met Jack at a ball, one night; and as we stood alone for a moment, he told me he expected to leave our town the next day, for a time—and before he left he would like to say that to me which was nearest his heart. Well, when a man talks that way, looks tenderly into your eyes, and gently presses the hand resting on his arm, as he did that night, we generally *think* they mean business. I told him what hour he might call the next morning; but, oh, dear, dear! The next morning I began early the task of braiding my hair—I knew how Jack liked best to see my hair arranged, and he was the one I cared to please; but in vain did I try to braid—in the midst of my work did these agents begin pouring in; sometimes 'twas a book, the best thing ever written; sometimes a picture, a perfect gem; sometimes one thing, sometimes another. At last I got out of patience, for the hour of Jack's call had nearly rolled around, and *I* was not yet ready to receive him; so I said to Bridget, our new girl, very impatiently—

"'Don't let us see another one; just get a stick, if necessary, and defend us. Tell them we are all busy, engaged. I'm just tired of it.'

"I'll take care, Miss Abigail, not one shall get in," said Bridget, and she did take care. She stationed herself behind the door, and when a knock was heard she bounced out with her stick and not one entered, so I went on with my braiding in peace. At length she came in. "Miss Abigail," she said, "there was one I could hardly keep out—he said he *would* come in, and when I told him you was engaged he looked real bad. Then I told him to git away or I'd use my stick on him, and he didn't say another word, but just turned and walked off."

I made my toilet at last and waited for my lover, but he never came; and how do you suppose I felt when a year afterwards I received the following:

"MISS ABIGAIL SMITH,—I thank you for your treatment of me one year ago when you had your servant order me from your home, and even threatened to use her stick should I refuse. I went away believing myself heart-broken. I loved you so—but allow me to say the wound is healed, and I am now happy with another.

"JACK HART."

But if here ain't a tear trickling down my old wrinkled cheek. Pshaw, men are all humbugs. I'll not shed a tear for one of 'em—yet do you wonder why I hate agents?

IN THE FIRELIGHT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY MRS. ELLEN M. MITCHELL.

Maud sat before the glowing grate,
A maiden, fairest of the fair;
I loved her—what would be my fate?
Do angels o'er for mortals care?

Alone she sat with earnest gaze
Bent on the fire in dreamy thought,
Strange sights she saw within the blaze,
And pictures rare her fancy wrought.

She saw me not—I feared to break
The spell that held her heart in thrall;
Oh! would she from that day-dream wake
To be my wife, my all in all?

I spoke—what caused the sunlit flush
That drove the lily from her face?
Why did that rosy, mantling blush,
Seem full of such enchanting grace?

"Sweet Maud," I said, "my heart is drear,
Alone I tread the path of life;
Fain would I taste of fireside cheer;
I love you—will you be my wife?"

The flames flashed up with flickering glow,
And touched with gold her soft brown hair;
Would she be mine, for weal or woe,
This maiden, fairest of the fair?

Or was the pearl beyond my reach?
Was she then dumb with sad surprise?
I waited—would she ne'er find speech,
Ne'er lift to mine those drooping eyes?

What whisper soft was that I heard?
So soft it seemed a half-caress?
Was I mistaken in the word,
Or was it not a low-breathed "yes?"

She "raised" her eyes; I saw "the gleam"
Of tender joy she could not hide;
Was this wild rapture all a dream?
I clasped her to my heart, my bride.

SOILED FACES.

It is a startling and somewhat amusing fact, says the New York Commercial Advertiser, that the majority of people's faces are seldom clean. Generally the habit of washing the face in the morning prevails, but with many persons it is the only time in twenty-four hours that this ablution takes place. With some women there exists a prejudice against washing their faces at all; they believe that bathing and rubbing produce eruptions—that the skin of the face is handsomer the less it is washed. Men return from business, and, before entering the drawing-room, retire to their dressing apartments to "wash their hands and brush their hair," unconscious that their faces are not clean. Ladies come home from a shopping excursion or a drive in the park, and arrange their toilets without touching their faces, excepting to dust them with a little powder as the last act of embellishment. We invariably send the children to nurse to have their faces washed before dinner, or a dozen times daily; but because we are men and women, and have not streaks of black across cheek or nose, we do not question the cleanliness of our faces.

It is taken for granted that the faces of adult creation are clean, unless it be those of machinists, chimney sweeps or coal-heavers. We are certainly impressed with the muddy complexion of Mrs. Slovenly, and remark how "sallow" Mrs. Slipshod has become, but it does not occur to us that their faces are always soiled. We meet Miss Blank on the promenade, who has risen late and washed her face hurriedly, leaving the sleepy bugs in the corners of her eyes; we exclaim, "Had Miss Blank a clear skin, how pretty she would be!" We should not believe that it was rarely that Miss Blank's face was thoroughly washed, that it was usually covered with a mixture of "Oriental Cream" and dust, which, being slept in at night, and but half removed in the morning, soon changes the natural purity of the skin.

There is no portion of the body that requires so much care, as to cleanliness, as the face. It is the receptacle for the dust from the room day and night. It receives the siftings blown from the ash barrels and coal carts, and all other kinds of impurities in the streets. Specks of oily dandruff from the hair are hourly falling on the face, and the most conservative of us are constantly placing our faces against something that soils, from the cheek of the sour baby, who is the pet of the household, to the shaggy coat of Romp, the dog, whom we stoop to fondle now and then—saying nothing of the kittens who brush against the sides of our faces, from the back of the easy chair twenty times daily, and whom we know have fleas. (This we will never admit to mamma, for fear of their banishment to the wood-shed.)

If the persons who are otherwise fastidiously nice, would be as proportionately particular to keep their faces clean, we should see more of the fair, glowing complexions, and less of the yellow, faded skins, with sallow lines around the neck. There is nothing that so beautifies the face as its freshness and cleanliness from the frequent use of water, with gentle friction. There is more truth than poetry in the stale observation of persons looking two or three shades whiter after their ablutions. The face is fairer after washing, because it is cleaner, and when it is not often bathed it is badly soiled. That the face be thoroughly washed at night, with a little fine soap to remove any greasy substances that may have settled in the eyebrows or crevices of the features, is essential for its perfect cleanliness. The eyes require particular washing to preserve their beauty and strength of sight. How few persons consider this, when they wipe them over once a day with a wash-rag or sponge! "Cleanliness is next to godliness." Moses' face "shone" when he descended from the mount where he had been talking with God. If ours do not shine with a holy light, they may with a growing freshness from the frequent use of cold water.

☞ THE END OF A NOVEL DIVORCE SUIT.—In the Sawyer divorce case, New York, Mrs. Sawyer has obtained an absolute divorce, with an allowance of $30 per month. The peculiarity of this case is, that although there was no marriage ceremony, the court held that the fact of the couple living together for eighteen years was sufficient to make them husband and wife in the eye of the law. Mrs. Sawyer was a circus rider for a number of years, and Mr. Sawyer is a veterinary surgeon.

☞ A new Italian opera is announced, the scene of which is laid in the Garden of Eden. The choruses of seraphs and demons can be easily arranged, but there is said to be much difficulty in settling upon the costumes of the primal duo, the soprano insisting upon dressing Eve with a yellow satin train and diamond necklace, whilst the tenor wants to wear a purple velvet cloak and a rapier, as Adam.

☞ An exchange says: "If you are a wise man, you will treat the world as the moon treats it—show only one side of yourself, seldom show yourself too much at a time, and let what you show be calm, cool and polished," and, it might be added, "give every man you see a new quarter."

☞ Flirtations on the stairs are so popular in Washington society, and the stairways are so blocked thereby, that there is talk of having temporary staircases distributed through the rooms for the accommodation of these fond people.

DOING WITHOUT THE "POST."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Once the mails got troubled
And turned them inside out,
And things we wanted eastward
Just took the western route:
To do without our letters
Was bad to say the most,
But worse than that assailed us—
We did without the Post.

All week we watched and waited
And to the office sent,
But each one kept returning
The very way they went,
And so we moped and pouted
As though by morphine dosed,
And things went awry six ways
Because we missed the Post.

Next week the things got righted,
News came from far and near,
And two Posts came together
Our waiting eyes to cheer.
I tell you well and truly
Without a thought of boast,
I'd do without my dinner
Before I'd lose the Post.

SADIE BEATTY.

The Cost of Conquest.

BY CLEMENTINE MONTAGU.

CHAPTER XXI.

FRIENDS VERSUS RELATIONS.

The love of kindred—that to set 'gainst love.
—*Sheridan Knowles.*

Katherine had battled through her illness with youthful strength, and woke out of her long delirium a wan, feeble creature, too weak to think of all the sorrow that had befallen her, or to dread the gloomy future that lay so dark before her. "Sam" had fetched her luggage, and he and his wife had tended her kindly and unselfishly, without any idea whether they would ever be reimbursed for their trouble and expense on her behalf.

She seemed to have no friends—not a creature appeared to be interested in her in any way—and whether her assertion that she had money was true or not they had no means of knowing.

Yet there were people anxious to know where to find her, but utterly at fault as to where to look or what to do. Captain Haughton, learning of the Underwood catastrophe, and the arrival of the Penelope at the same time, made many inquiries as to her whereabouts without success. He found the Slades, and was not a little surprised to learn that they had let the forlorn girl go away from the vessel by herself, or without so much as seeing her to the station; but Mrs. Slade so thoroughly expounded to him how very well satisfied Katherine appeared, and the lieutenant seemed so completely in awe of his better half, that he was surprised no longer.

"A pack of heartless wretches," he said to himself, as he left their house; "selfish and thoughtless. "Where can the poor girl be, I wonder?"

But it was many a long day before he met Katherine Branscombe.

Another person who was very anxious to know what had become of the girl his master had jilted was Guiseppe Santi, Philip Reynell's Maltese valet. He had seen her beautiful face looking so earnestly homeward as the Penelope passed them on their outward voyage, and he was keenly curious to know what had become of her. He had friends in London who inquired for him, and tracked her from the vessel to the city, but lost trace of her when the cab left Nicholas-lane and proceeded westward.

He was rather gratified than otherwise that she had arrived.

"She'll turn up some time," he said to himself, with a mischievous chuckle. "I'd give a little to see their meeting! It'll come about when he least expects it, and then he will receive payment in full for all—in full!"

It took the poor invalid a day or two to remember where she was and how she came there. When she did, her first act was to have her boxes opened, and reimburse Mrs. Boker for her trouble and expense. Then, as she grew stronger, and began to comprehend her position, she begged Sam to find out who had been her uncle's lawyer, and to get him to call upon her. She was a sensible, clear-headed girl, and wished to know the worst at once.

He came—a civil, courteous gentleman, void of feeling, as a lawyer should be—pocketed the fee she tendered him, and then listened to her story of who she was and how she came there. Philip Reynell's name was never mentioned. She only stated that she was Mr. Underwood's niece, and that she had come home, expecting to inherit a considerable fortune.

The lawyer took snuff vehemently at her recital, but could offer her no advice in particular.

"It's a sad business my dear madam—very sad," he said, shaking his head oracularly; "but I see you are prepared for the worst, so I need not mince the matter to you. There is nothing for any one—absolutely nothing! I do not suppose there has been any crash in the commercial world for many years so complete as your uncle's ruin."

"Then my father's money is all gone?"

"All, and many another father's and daughter's with it. More than one death already lies at James Underwood's door besides his own."

"Thank Heaven, my dear father never knew—never was troubled by any doubts concerning him. Can you tell me where to find my aunt and cousins:"

"Well, really, I can't, my dear young lady. You see, the widow and orphans, in a case like this, are generally glad to hide themselves in the deepest obscurity. Mrs. Underwood was not a woman much respected by those who knew her. Her vanity and extravagance have had a great deal to do with the tragedy, I suspect. She called at my office, a week or two since, but left no address."

"And you cannot help me to find them?"

He rubbed his hands, and was really very sorry, but could not, and bowed himself out, leaving poor Katherine in despair. A young lady with no money and no friends was hardly worth taking much trouble for.

"Never you mind, miss," Mrs. Boker said, when she heard of it; "my Sam 'll ferret 'em out for you if you want to see 'em, if so be as they are in London, and I don't think they'll leave it somehow."

Sam was as good as his word, and finding an old servant of the family, discovered their whereabouts, and conveyed Katherine to the remote region of Walworth, to meet her cousin Mary, as we have seen. She expected nothing from the visit; but she was very lonely, and she turned to the only kindred she knew with yearning affection.

Colonel Branscombe had been an only child, and her mother and her brother the orphan children of parents who had died when they were very young, so that, save her aunt and cousins, she had literally no kindred.

"Oh, I'm so glad you've found us," said the impulsive Mary, kissing her when they got inside the common-looking little house, compared with which Mrs. Boker's Bloomsbury residence was quite palatial in its dimensions, "and mamma will be so glad, too—that is"—added the girl, in some confusion, remembering all the uncomfortable remarks that had been made about her cousin. "Wait here a minute, dear, while I go up and tell her you are here. She has been in such trouble, you know," she said, apologetically, "that she is easily startled and shocked."

Katherine thought no heralding would have been needed if her relatives had come to her at any time, and she tried not to hear the querulous, snappish tones of her aunt's voice as they greeted poor Mary in loud upbraiding.

"Who did you say, child?"

"Katherine, mamma—our cousin from India."

"Mary, you're a fool, and an unfeeling fool," was the sharp retort, "when you know very well I cannot bear any reproaches, to bring her here! Why did you not tell her I was out?"

"I couldn't mamma. Besides she looks so ill."

"Ill—stuff! What has she had to make her ill, compared to what I have gone through? Well, if I must see her I must. Put those tickets away, Ida—ugh, I can't bear to touch them!—and give me the money, and straighten the room a little. The idea of any one hunting us up in a place like this!"

A good deal of Mrs. Underwood's pleasant tirade reached poor Katherine's ears, for the house was small and the walls were thin. But for the remembrance of poor Mary's kindly face, and honest welcoming kiss, she would have walked away from the house and sought her kindred no more; and there was a mist before her eyes and a swelling in her throat as she walked up the narrow stairs into the stuffy little "front room" which was her aunt's parlor.

Perhaps it was as well she had heard a few chilling words, for impulse would have led her to embrace her aunt, and greet her cousins with a loving kiss; but she was prepared now for the frigid shake of the hand with which Mrs. Underwood received her, and the stiffly polite tone in which Ida hoped she would "take a seat."

"I was in hopes I should have been spared the trial of being found in a place like this," were the first words that her aunt addressed to her. "I hope you have not come to upbraid me or your poor dead uncle. I could not bear that—my nerves are not equal to it."

"I had no such thought," said Katherine, hastily, every term of endearment dried upon her lips by the greeting she received. "I came to—to—"

She almost broke down. If these were relatives, better the friendship of the cabman and his wife ten thousand times.

"To what?"

"To see you, aunt. I thought you would have been as glad to see me as I should be to meet and know you. Mary had nothing to do with it."

But Mary had everything to do with it with Mrs. Underwood, and she replied accordingly.

"I should have been very glad, child, if we could have received you as you had a right to expect. I did hope neither you, nor any one else, for that matter, would ever find us in this hole. Where have you been since you got home? I did not know you had any friends in London."

"Heaven sent me some, or I should have died. I have been very ill."

"You look ill. By the way, I thought you were coming home to be married. I am sure I understood so, and that we were to have seen about it. Your poor uncle said so, or else I dreamed it, and I don't think I did."

"You did not, madam. My father believed so—intended that it should be so—but he was mistaken. I could not undeceive him in the last hours of his life, for he was happy in the thought; but I have known for some time it would never be."

She spoke calmly enough; but what a tempest of sorrow was raging in her heart at the thought of Philip Reynell and his broken faith only the Heaven that sees all things knew.

"Ah, I remember now," Mrs. Underwood went on. "We heard of the gentleman's marriage, and thought it must be to you. And what do you intend to do, Miss Branscombe?"

"Work, madam, I am well nigh penniless now."

"As we are; but my girls cannot work. I don't suppose they have been educated like you to make it come easy."

"I don't know how easy work comes, madam," said Katharine, rising. "To my knowledge, till I started for Europe on this voyage of sorrow, I never did anything for myself that the hands of others could do for me; but the necessity has come now, and I will try, Heaven helping me, to find some way of earning a living that will not disgrace my father's daughter, nor compromise my own feelings as a gentlewoman."

"I'm sure I hope you'll succeed," said Ida, with a half-concealed sneer; "but I'm afraid you'll find it very difficult to find anything a lady can do. But people's notions are so different."

"I shall not be ashamed to do anything a woman may do and keep her self-respect," Katharine said, haughtily. "I am sorry to have intruded on you, aunt, or led you to expect I wanted anything at your hands. My father fancied I should be a welcome visitor, and I came at his bidding."

She would not cry, though the tears were almost choking her, and she hardly heard Mrs. Underwood's mumbled apology about altered circumstances, no place to receive her, and so forth. She rose to go, and they calmly bade her good day, without asking her to come again, or inquiring where she lived, or offering her any refreshment—all but Mary, who rushed down after her, to hug her in the passage, and tell her not to mind.

"I am nobody, dear," she said, with a sigh. "They don't think anything of me; but I'll come and see you if you'll have me, and I'll love you, dear. Poor papa used to talk to me about you."

Katherine returned her caress, and gave her a card with Mrs. Boker's address on it, and went her way to where honest Sam was waiting with the cab, for he had insisted on conveying her himself.

"She warn't fit to go at all," he declared; "and she shouldn't be jumbled through the streets by any one, if he knowed it."

So he had driven her with the utmost care.

She got in, and leaning back while Sam took off the horse's nose-bag and prepared to start, she burst into such a passion of tears as not even her father's death had made her shed. Sam was appalled at her agitation, and put his head in at the window to offer homely consolation.

"Don't 'ee do that, miss; now, don't 'ee," he urged. "That's a thing as never helped man, woman, or child over a stile yet, and it won't help you. We'll get home to the old 'oman—she'll get you something to refresh you; and maybe she'll be able to comfort you a bit—who knows?"

Home to Mrs. Boker—for it seemed the only home she had now—Katherine went, the exhausting tears she shed easing her full heart a little, but making her head and eyes burn with fierce throbs. Mrs. Boker exclaimed at her appearance, and insisted on putting her to bed at once, and then, sitting down by her, begged her, in her straightforward, honest way, to tell her what ailed her.

"Troubles told are half cured, dearie," she said, as she would have spoken to a daughter of her own; "maybe me and Sam can do something, though we are only poor folks. No; you're not hindering me a bit. The first floors are gone out to dinner, and the parlors have had theirs long ago, and it ain't good for you to be moping by yourself."

And Katherine, much moved, but brightened, nevertheless, by the kindly sympathy, unfolded her dread of the future, and her disappointment at the shilling reception she had met from her aunt.

"Never you mind them," said Mrs. Boker promptly. "They're a stuck-up, heartless lot, and knowing them won't help you much; and as for the other, why, Heaven bless you, miss, there's lots of things a lady can do as wants to be independent. Why, it's only ladies that can teach the fine things that ladies learn—music and painting, and the like. You just get well, my dear, and you'll soon be earning a little fortune."

"But I've nothing left, my dear Mrs. Boker—only a few pounds."

"Pounds!" ejaculated the good woman, as fervently as if Katherine had said thousands. "You don't know what a long way a pound will go in one's keep if it's rightly spent. You just stay here with me a bit, and get strong and well, and I'll make the money go so far you won't know it. Why, there's a hundred places waiting for you if you only knew it, where you'd make a fortune. And Heaven forgive me for lying!" she said to her husband, when Katherine dropped asleep, quieted and refreshed. "She'll never be able to work, and what she's to do I don't know, poor soul; but I've put a little hope into her heart, and it's the best physic under the sun."

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. COMPTON, OF THE "STRAND."

"Begging a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil."

Alas for poor Katherine, and the many profitable ways that were waiting for her to get a living in! It was a pardonable lie of Mrs. Boker's perhaps, for it quieted her a little, and made her rest for awhile, during which she gained strength rapidly. But her money came to an end, and she knew that she must go out to battle with the world, and fight for the daily bread that is so hard to win. She took counsel with her landlady, and insisted on giving up the room she had been occupying, and going into the tiny back attic at an almost nominal rent. Mrs. Boker objected, but she was firm.

"When I've made the fortune I'll come back to this one," she said; "till then I must economise."

Economise! She soon found that she must do more than that—that she must do as many a lady tenderly nurtured has done before her: sell some of her possessions to buy the means of living. Poor Katherine! There is no need for us to record how she tried and failed to get employment in all the recognised ways in which a woman can work; how she answered advertisements, and tried agencies, and waited at the doors of vulgar people to be supercilliously dismissed by arrogant servants, and all the rest of the bitter humiliation that comes with an empty purse.

Her Indian friends, wondering what had become of her, little thought of the daily and hourly torture her refined nature was undergoing in her struggle with life and its needs. There was not one of them but would have opened their purses and their hearts to their old colonel's daughter, had they known of her extremity, and done it, too, in the generous, kindly way that carries no sting with it; but Katherine made no sign. She could not tell them that the very necessaries of life were growing scarce to her, or that the man they had known, and whom she had loved and trusted, had turned out false to her. So she struggled on, bravely and unceasingly, though day by day hope died into bitter disappointment, as each thing she tried seemed to become an utter impossibility when she turned to it.

She was too inexperienced, too young, too weak, too handsome, too something or other, for every one; and she began to wonder why she had been permitted to come alive through the ordeal of her illness, why left in a world which seemed to have no place for her in it.

"Why don't you turn (authoress?" one woman more arrogant than usual said to her one day, when, after waiting among a crowd of applicants, she had been made to sing and play for her, to judge of her proficiency. "All the half-educated women, that fancy themselves clever, try novel-writing as a last resource, nowadays. I should think a lady of your refinement ought to get on in that line."

The words were a sneer at Katherine's retort upon some vulgar question asked by her would-be employer, but, though they stung, they set her to thinking.

Could she write anything that people would read, or, what was more to the purpose, that any one would buy? In her happy girlhood at Allahabad she had been fond of scribbling, and even since her sorrowful life in England had commenced she had not given up the pastime. She would try. Publishers could but say her nay, as other people had done—she was getting used to refusals now. Yes, she would try.

So she stayed at home one whole day—a bright summer day, for July had come now—and wrote carefully out some of the best scraps, poetical and otherwise, in her portfolio, and read them over, and corrected them, with a feeling of mingled hope and fear such as tyros only know.

She had no idea of publishers and their ways, and went unaided, and without introduction, into the grim precincts of the "Row" and its purlieus, to seek a market for her wares. Alas! she found that, like governessing, there was no royal road to authorship. More heartsickness, more scoffs, more weary disappointment, till she felt as if she could lay down the struggle, and die of very weariness and despair.

She went the round of all the magazines and publishers of light literature in vain. The answers she received might be stereotyped. "They were quite full," or "They never undertook anything by unknown authors," or "They might, perhaps, insert the articles, if they were worth anything, at some far-distant point of time, but they never paid for amateur work," and so on; running through the whole string of polite refusals, the sickening heart of a striving aspirant knows so well.

"Try once more, dear," said kindly Mrs. Boker, one night, after she had come home more weary and dispirited than ever, with only a few shillings between her and actual want.

The summer had waned, and the few jewels she possessed had gone, one by one, to supply her pressing needs. She would not burden the kindly cabman and his wife with her maintenance, though they would fain have bade her stay, and wait for better days to pay them. Her mourning was growing rusty; she had only provided what she thought she should need till her arrival at her uncle's, intending to supply herself with a suitable outfit in London, and she had no means of replacing it now.

"It won't stand much more brushing," she said, with a smile, as Mrs. Boker hung up her worn dress, and brought her a loose wrapper. "It won't be fit to go out many more times in."

"You go once more. If nothing comes of it, my dream 'll go for nought," the cabman's wife said, cheerily. "I've done nothing but dream of pots of gold this last three nights, and you'll find one, see if you don't."

"I'm afraid I sha'n't; but I will try again. I was recommended to-day to go to Mr. Compton, of the Strand Magazine. They say that everything they take into the office is read; and so few of them do that."

"And I'm sure if they read what you wrote when you went to the play with me and Tom, they won't know how to give you enough for it," Mrs. Boker returned, enthusiastically. "You just sleep on it, miss. Believe in the good luck, and it 'll come, see if it don't."

Mr. Compton of the Strand was declared in the trade to be as uncompromising and hard as his magazine was pleasant to read, and free and easy in its manner. Having no particular literary tastes himself, he had gone into the business as he would have gone into any other kind of trade, and treated the authors who brought their productions to him as he would the manufacturers of any kind of tangible commodity. It was a question of sale and barter with him—so many pages of readable matter, so much money. If he could have arranged it by weight or measure it would have been more agreeable to him. In his eyes, the man on whom Providence had bestowed the talents that amuse, instruct, and benefit mankind was no more than the artisan who made the paper used in his office, or the compositors who stood at their cases and set up the words given to them as mechanically as steam-propelled machines.

Yet he was kindly in manner, and not unmindful of the well-being of those under him. To work for him once and to please him was to work for him a long time, and there was something in the tone of the brusquely-uttered, "Well, young lady?" with which he greeted Katherine when she was ushered into his august presence, which made her feel the first touch of hope she had known for many a day.

There were two gentlemen in the room when she entered—friends, apparently, for empty glasses and a champagne bottle stood among the paraphernalia of the editor's desk—and he said, familiarly, to the elder one, "Don't go, my boy," as they left the room. The younger had a roll of paper in his hand, and Mr. Compton touched it with the end of his penholder.

"Think it over, young one," he said. "No one else will have it—I'm sure of that. I'll give you what I said—five pounds and a good place in the magazine—and if—mind, I say if—it succeeds, I'll talk to you again. Why, man, if you knew the cartloads of stuff I have offered me for nothing, you'd think yourself well-paid. I want to give your father's son a lift if I can, only you must have to creep before you can run, like the babies do."

The young man went his way, and he turned to Katherine.

"Now, my dear young lady," he said, "what can I do for you?"

Very timidly she unfolded her business, and Mr. Compton nursed his left leg and looked keenly at her.

"Poetry's a drug in the market," he said, "and occasional articles all go for padding, unless they are by known authors. It's a poor look-out. What else can you do but write?"

"Starve!" she replied, vehemently, for she was almost desperate; and he said, "Lord bless me!" and looked at her with his stubbly gray hair almost standing on end.

She was different from most of the women who bearded him in his den. She was neither strong-minded and insolent, nor weak and tearful, and he respected her accordingly. By a few adroit questions, he gathered the true state of the case, and guessed what she must have endured.

"I tell you what I'll do for you," he said, laying his hand on the little bundle of MSS. she had brought. "I'll read every one of them myself. Legibly written? Ah, very nice and clear. Most beginners manage that; and if any of them are equal to the common run of magazine articles, I'll take them. After that, as you heard me tell that young fellow just now—more conceit than brains he has—the public must decide."

Katherine thanked him heartily—not with many words, for her heart was very full—but with looks and tremulous tones that spoke volumes.

"Don't you tell any one I promised to read them myself," he said, with a smile, as he showed her out, "or you'll raise a hornet's nest about my ears. It's a thing I don't do for many authors, I can tell you; but I'm going to judge for myself this time. Come the day after to-morrow at three o'clock, and I'll give you ten minutes. Be punctual, mind, or you'll not get it."

Of the two gentlemen she had seen when she went in, one was standing in the outer office when she went out.

He was a handsome, distinguished-looking man, with black hair, growing gray on the forehead. He was nearer fifty than forty years of age, but his figure was erect and stately, and his features showed no signs of age. He had marked the graceful carriage and carefully-arranged dress, which, though worn, stamped its wearer a lady as she went in. As she came out he took further notice of her. Her veil was up, and he could see the pure, pale face, with its coronet of dark hair, the earnest eyes, the cheeks on which a transient flush of hope rested, and the full lips parted a little, as lips will part when bright thoughts force a smile, showing the white teeth behind them. He noted every point in her appearance—the well-fitting gloves, though mended carefully to preserve them, the flowing drapery, a crimson flower—Mrs. Boker's gift—nay, even the subtle perfume which exhaled from her handkerchief.

He was not a man who cared for or was curious about women, but Katherine Branscombe's image stamped itself on his mind, and stayed there with a curious pertinacity. She seemed to brighten up the dingy place, all redolent of engine oil and printers' ink, with a radiance it wanted before. He opened the door for her to pass out, and she thanked him with a smile and a bow that turned his head still further.

"I'm an ass!" he said to himself. "Who can she be? I'll ask Compton."

"Haven't the least idea!" was Mr. Compton's reply, when the question was put to him. "Didn't ask her."

He was cynically disposed now, and inclined to think himself a soft-hearted fool for having promised to read Katherine's MSS.

"Didn't ask her?"

"Not I!"

"Why, she was here—"

"Oh, ah, I know—half an hour, I dare say; wheedled me—well, no, she didn't do that; but, at any rate, I've promised to wade through all this. It's the old story—a reduced lady, authorship or starvation, and all that sort of thing. She'd make a capital actress."

"She's a lady, I'm sure."

"Heyday? Are you turning squire of dames in your old years? Women are the very deuce in business matters. Then, since you're so enthusiastic, perhaps you'll wade through the MSS. for me—that would be a real charity. Whatever you think well of I'll read."

It was Mr. Hastings, Captain Haughton's friend, who thus encountered, without knowing it, Philip Reynell's forsaken love, and he turned over the neatly-written pages, wondering who the writer could be who had impressed him so curiously. At length he came to a signature.

"Katherine Branscombe, by Jove!" he exclaimed.

Mr. Compton looked up from his remote corner.

"Oh, you've found out her name, have you?" he asked.

"Yes."

"And know her?"

"Know her story."

"Well?"

"I'll tell it to you another day. In the meantime, read that—there's stuff in it—get Sinwood to illustrate it, and put it in the Strand. It'll go. If you don't like it yourself, do it as a favor to me."

"Poetry"

"Yes."

The editor made a grimace.

"Ugh! Long?"

"No."

"Fire away! You *can* read poetry, Hastings. What's it called?"

"'A Shilling a Night.'"

"Ah, theatrical! Go on!"

Theatrical, insomuch that Katherine had seized the idea while at the theatre with her humble friends, little dreaming that her dream of a poor player's aspirations would be her first stepping-stone to fame and fortune. Mr. Hastings did "fire away," and with excellent intonation and spirit.

"I've only a shilling a night,
And she, perhaps, a thousand a-year,
Yet I look, and forget, and dream,
And think of her as my dear.

I look from the glittering stage,
Across the darkened pit,
To the circle, flashing with gems,
Where sometimes I see her sit.

Does she know me from the rest?
Not she; to her casual sight
I'm only part of the play—
A machine at a shilling a night.

Yet I love her, though never a word
Has passed between us twain;
Though I know that the season over,
We never shall meet again.

She rises to go, and the light
Fades all into darkening gloom,
And I go to my pauper meal,
And my cheerless attic room.

And I dream of her, and the stars
Whisper around my bed,
Telling of joy in the life to come,
As they shine o'er my sleeping head.

"'There's another world,' they sing,
And perhaps in the glory there
I may meet with her in the shining throng—
My love with the golden hair.

'Tis a world of joy, a world of love,
'The world which sets this right,'
A world where even a thousand a-year
May mate with a shilling a night."

CHAPTER XXIII.

"DIOGENES' TUB."

"But on her face there trembles peaceful light,
That seems a smile, but yet is far less bright."

"H'm, that'll go!" was Mr. Compton's comment on Katherine's little poem. "It's well enough for poetry."

"You've no soul, Compton," Mr. Hastings responded.

"I've brains, my dear fellow, and they answer my purpose quite as well. However, I'll take the thing—and anything else you fancy will do for the Strand—to oblige you, mind. I daresay Miss Branscombe, or whatever her name is, will be thankful for a five-pound note for them."

"You'll oblige yourself and the public as much as me, Compton. She'll make her mark yet. Poor girl! To think that a delicately-nurtured lady should come to—"

"To take pay of Dick Compton, whose father was a workman, and his grandfather the Lord knows who, and who began life on his own account as a shoeblack. Oh, pocket your fine feelings, my boy! The world's gone round a turn or two lately, and they're out of fashion. As to her being a lady, all women call themselves ladies now, the title's not honorable. She writes like an educated woman—that's enough for me. I'll try her."

"What an old Diogenes you are, Compton."

"Hav'n't half his patience, my boy. I left off looking for honesty long ago. There, I've disposed of that," tying up a parcel as he spoke. "Now tell me about your paragon that I'm to stand literary godfather to."

Mr. Hastings told Katherine's story to no uninterested ears. Mr. Compton was not half such a cynic as he made himself out. All that was suppressed was the name of Philip Reynell.

"The scoundrel!" exclaimed the publisher; "the heartless hound! I'll help her along. I like pluck. Hang me if I couldn't almost marry her myself to show him she could do better, if not in money, in comfort!"

"Perhaps she wouldn't marry you," suggested his friend, to whom the idea of Katherine Branscombe's marrying anybody did not seem pleasant.

"Don't look at me like a thunder-cloud—I'm not going to ask her. She'll have her revenge when she's made her way as an authoress—and she may. She's not the sort of woman to die 'wasting in despair,' and all that sort of thing. It will be 'love to hatred turned,' and that Medea-like pleasantry with her, I suspect."

Katherine went to her appointment with Mr. Compton with more fear than hope in her heart. He had spoken kindly to her, 'tis true, but it might be nothing more than a passing kind speech. She was agreeably surprised to receive a five-pound note, and to be informed that three out of her sketches and poems would appear in the magazine at an early date; and, more than this, that if she chose to commence at once a work of greater magnitude, Mr. Compton would consider if he could do anything with it.

Her heart was beating so wildly with the new joy and relief from utter despair that she did not notice that the same gentleman who opened the door for her on her former visit performed the same office again, or that the dark, earnest eyes that had watched her so intently then as she went out, followed her with even more of respectful admiration this time.

She went back, hopeful and happy, to her kind landlady, feeling that there was at last a chance that she could at any rate earn food and shelter, if nothing more. Yet the cause of all this happiness was only five pounds—a sum that not a year ago she had thought nothing of squandering on a trinket, or flinging away as her share on any one of the many amusements of her barrack life. Not a year since she was the darling of all, an heiress, and a cherished daughter of a rich man. Now her father lay silent and cold in his grave beyond the sea, her lover was faithless, her friends ignorant of her fate, and she working for her daily bread, dependent even for shelter upon friends who had sprung with charitable gentleness from the ranks of strangers.

But some one found her out—some one who had known her father—and relief came when it was most wanted. Two days after she had received the five pounds, Mrs. Boker came to her door with a letter.

"It's registered, miss," she said. "You'll have to sign the paper."

"Registered! For me! There must be some mistake. I don't know any one that would write to me!"

"There's no mistake, miss—it's plain enough."

It was, indeed—her name and address, in a round, clerkly hand, impossible not to read, and she signed the receipt and broke the seal. It was from a well-known law firm in the Temple.

"MADAM—*We are instructed by a client of ours, who had some business dealings with your father, the late Colonel Branscombe, to place the enclosed sum in your hands. It is the residue of a debt due from him to the said Colonel Branscombe, the former instalments of which were unfortunately paid to the firm of Underwood and Company late last year. Apologizing for the delay of this last payment, which was caused by ignorance of your whereabouts, we are, madam, your obedient servants,* LINGHAM, NEWTON, AND CO.

"*Miss Katherine Branscombe.*"

The enclosure was a hundred pound Bank of England note, and Katherine sat staring at it, feeling as bewildered as if a gold mine had suddenly opened at her feet. She went to Messrs. Lingham and Newton, but could get at no satisfactory explanation of who her father's debtor was. They talked legal jargon to her till she was bewildered, and she signed a receipt for the money with a vague idea that it came from Mr. Smith; but they convinced her that it was legally hers, and that she might do as she pleased with it.

It was a very graceful and elegantly-dressed lady, albeit attired with the utmost simplicity, that Mr. Hastings met the next time he watched for her at Mr. Compton's door, and she began to have a vague idea that he was watching for her.

Time went on, and she had a recognised place in the Bohemian world of literature, and people began to ask who "Simla" was who wrote such touching scraps of poetry, and such telling tales and articles, in the Strand. She insisted on her incognito, and Mr. Compton was too keen a man of business to betray it. She went to his house now and then—a snug river-side retreat, with nothing of a Diogenes' look about it—where a kind, matronly widowed sister and two pleasant nieces kept house for him, and there she met Mr. Hastings, who, without her knowing it, could have fallen down and worshipped the ground trodden by her shapely feet. In vain he told himself that he was an ass, and figuratively beat his breast and tore his hair over his own foolishness. The passion that had leaped into his heart with his first sight of Katherine's pale face had grown and strengthened, till he felt he must speak or grow idiotic—stupefied with the weight of this new love.

And she, knowing nothing, went her way serenely; not happy with any boisterous happiness, for she could not forget, but tranquil, and resolved to live the life marked out for her, without repining at the inscrutable ways of Heaven.

She could see Philip Reynell's name floating through the papers, and she did see it sometimes, not quite without a pang, but without any unavailing sorrow. She read of his return from his bridal tour—of his reception at home—of his wife's beauty—of the hopes of an heir to Boscobel—and she began to feel as if her part in the life of this man had been all a dream—a thing of the imagination, and that the Philip Reynell she read so much of was an utter stranger, whose existence was nothing to her. Yet she wore his ring of betrothal still. Its diamonds flashed side by side with the tiny gems that surrounded the cherished lock of gray hair cut from her dead father's head before they put him in his coffin—his letters were in her desk, his portrait in the locket that hung from her watch-chain.

"I will not part with them till I stand face to face with him, and find out the secret charm that stole him from me," she had sworn in her first agony, and she had not altered her resolution.

But her heart was not dead because Philip was faithless. She was young and hopeful, and strong now, and with youth and health life cannot be all dark. She was conscious of liking Mr. Hastings's society—of feeling pleasure when this grave, dark man, so cold and stern to the rest of the world, unbent to her, and smiled in her face with a smile that lent unutterable radiance to his usually impassive features.

At length he spoke.

Christmas came round—the first English Christmas she had known—and she had promised to spend it at the Limes, as Mr. Compton's riverside house was called. She had not forgotten Mrs. Boker; but she was rich enough now to take the first floor of her comfortable house, and live, if not in style, at any rate, in ease and quiet. The Limes was a pretty place, a thoroughly comfortable English home, and Mr. Compton never quitted it winter or summer.

"He did not like shifting," he said, "nor care for fashion." And the circle of tried friends, who were always welcome there, found as pleasant a fireside in winter and as lovely a garden in summer as the country could furnish.

Katherine was a favorite guest there—a profitable contributor to the magazine, and a celebrated authoress in future, as Mr. Compton thoroughly believed she would be. She was a special favorite on that score, as well as for her personal attractions.

People wondered who the quiet, elegant girl was they met at the Limes—her name told nothing to any one in the publisher's circle of acquaintances, and she bound Mr. Hastings to secrecy. Not even to his old friend, Captain Haughton, did he reveal that he had found Philip Reynell's slighted love.

Christmas Day arrived, and found Katherine at the Limes. She had meant to spend it alone, for it was a doubly sad anniversary to her—the day of her father's death, and the one on which she had such loving talk with Philip about their future; but Mr. Compton and his household had contrived to overrule her decision.

"No good came of moping," they declared. "She should be as quiet as she liked at the Limes; but she must come."

So she went, quietly thankful for the good fortune that had befallen her—feeling an odd sense of unreality in a Christmas with the ground white with snow, and the blazing fires to counteract the piercing air without. She thought of Allahabad and the showers of rose-leaves that fell around her and Philip Reynell two years before, and of the scent of flowers in the air while her father lay dying. There was no lack of flowers here, for Mr. Compton, with all his cynicism, loved them, and rare blossoms scented the rooms where his guests were assembled.

A crimson bud was in Katherine's bosom, another in her hair, and she looked a very vision of loveliness as she stood there in the soft radiance of the lamps. She was at the piano when Mr. Hastings entered the room, her rich voice sending a flood of melody through the house, as she sang again and again to please her host and his friends—not the old Indian songs—not the airs that she had sung to her father and Philip—but music she had learned since—songs which had no association with the past that had been so happy.

"Let the dead past bury its dead," says the poet, and Katherine had stood by the graves of her love and her filial affection, and heard the clods drop into them, and strove to forget and endure.

Song after song went pealing out into the morning air from one sweet voice and another, and at length there came one that made her pulses thrill with a throb of sharp pain—

"I'm wearin' awa', Jean,
Like snaw-wreaths in thaw, Jean."

and all the eventful past year vanished from her ken, and she stood once more by her father's dying bed in their Indian bungalow. Just a year ago! and the very words she was listening to when she was summoned to see him die. It was no use—the tears would come, and she left the room softly, unnoticed by the eager group round the piano.

Mr. Hastings followed her, and found her in the deserted library, weeping such tears as only long-repressed grief sheds. Silently he took her hand, and in her loneliness and sorrow she did not withdraw it.

"Can I not comfort you?" he asked.

She shook her head, and struggled with her tears.

"I shall be better soon," she said. "It was the song—the association with it. It made me feel my loneliness so strongly—that is all."

He knew the circumstances of her father's death—he was enough her friend to have been told them—and he pressed the hand he held.

"Would that I had the power to make your life less lonely," he murmured. "Miss Branscombe—Katherine—will you give me the power?"

He had worried himself a thousand times over how he should put his question to her, if he ever found courage to put it at all, and now he had blurted it out without any preparation or premeditation at all. She looked at him in surprise—she hardly understood what he meant. He saw that she did not, and went on—

"I have had it in my heart to say to you, ever since the first hour of our meeting in the office yonder. Will you let me help to make your life brighter? Will you brighten mine as I never hoped to have it brightened in this world, and be my wife? I have loved you, it seems, an eternity; as I have never loved woman before—as I never could again."

He poured out his petition with eager agitation. She could not grasp nor comprehend the force of his passion for her, and her first feeling was one of almost repugnance to him. He saw it in her face.

"Ah, forgive me!" he said, sadly. "I should not have spoken now, and yet I felt I must speak or go mad. Do not repulse me to-night; let me hope for a few hours more, even though despair comes at the end of them!"

"You have been too kind for me to be angry," she said, gently; "but you have taken me by surprise."

"Will you let me repeat my question to-morrow? I must have an answer—my whole future depends upon it."

And Katherine, hardly knowing what she said, left him with a promise that on the morrow she would tell him whether she would be his wife or no.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MR. AND MRS. HASTINGS.

"His bride and his darling to be."

Mr. Hastings longed for the morning that was to bring the answer to his question, as ardently as ever boy lover longed for the girlish "yes" that was to make life one long Elysium to him. He loved as grave, staid, middle-aged men will love, passionately and blindly, though in this case the object of his devotion was worthy of it. It had been love at first sight, but the instinct which prompted it was a true one. As falteringly as a timid child he sought her the following day for her answer.

"I cannot give you love such as you give me," she said, quietly. "You know my story—you know now my heart was given—"

"And flung back to you like a broken toy! I know—curse him! Yet I cannot say that, Katherine, if the chance gives you to me."

"I cannot be your wife Mr. Hastings yet, till—"

"Till when?"

"Till I have forgotten that love, till I can look into my heart and see Philip Reynell's image there without a throb of pain, till I can stand face to face to him, and meet him as an utter stranger."

"And do you think that time will ever come?"

"No!"

The word was resolutely, calmly spoken, and he read in her face that while Philip Reynell lived no man would hold the place in her heart he longed to fill. Very gently he took her hand.

"Katherine," he said, "I love you, and my love can be very faithful and very patient. Knowing what I know, knowing Philip Reynell as I know him, I believe that your love for him will die whenever you may chance to meet. Be my wife, dear; let me make a home and a place for you in the world, and I will wait very patiently for the rest. I believe what the poet says, that Heaven 'Creates the love to reward the love,' and I have faith that your love will turn to me, when you know what a worthless object it is wasting its wealth on now."

She looked at him wonderingly, and her eyes flashed.

"You are severe," she said. "Except in his conduct to me, which is inexplicable, Philip Reynell was never unworthy. Any one who knows him will say the same of him."

"I know him, and I believe him with reason to be what I say. There is a mystery to clear up in his past life; I believe when it is cleared, your love and the respect of every honest man will alike leave him. Katherine, let me help you to clear it!"

"You are a strange wooer," she said, sadly. "You will not win me by disparaging him."

"I will not say one word about him. I will leave it all to time, if you will say yes. Ah, I can be very tender where I love, though I seem cold and stern now. I will be very tender to you, Katherine."

"I believe you would, Mr. Hastings," she answered, dreamily. "Do not tempt me to an unwomanly and sordid action. You say you love me, would marry me, even though another holds the first place in my heart. I cannot be blind to the advantage of such a marriage, or the pleasant picture of ease and rest you show me in the future. Do not tempt me! I cannot wrong your noble generosity by saying yes!"

"You can—you will! Ah, say it, Katherine, and I will wait for the rest! You shall do with me and mine what you will. Give me as much or as little of your heart as you choose, but be my wife—come and brighten my desolate home with your sweet presence."

Much longer and more earnestly still he pleaded, till Katherine, moved by his sincerity and eagerness, and longing, too, for some faithful heart to care for her, some strong arm to guide her in her lonely way, said "Yes" conditionally.

"You must take what I can give you," she said, gently and gravely. "I will be your true, faithful, loyal wife, and I will try to make your home happy for you, but—"

He would have no "buts," but drew her to him till he could lay his lips on hers, and murmured that he was content.

And Katherine was content, too, and the feeling that was springing up in her heart, and which she called gratitude, was very like love with another name—not the free, artless, unconstrained love she had given Philip Reynell—sorrow had made a woman of her since then—but a quiet, blissful content—a feeling of security and peace such as she never hoped to feel again.

It was a surprise to her to learn that her lover was wealthier than she thought—that she would be mistress of a country house called Holmdale, in a picturesque part of Yorkshire.

"Which I will put into the hands of architects and decorators at once," he said, proudly. "My wife must have the prettiest house in the county."

Katherine blushed rosy-red at the words, and asked him why he did not live there, for he had spoken of it as being shut up.

"Because the great sorrow of my life came to me there, my darling," he replied, gravely. "I have a story in my life. Will it make you rescind your promise if I tell it you, I wonder?"

"Nothing would make me go from my word," she replied, simply. "If there had been anything in your life to prevent your making me your wife, you would not have asked me to marry you."

He thanked her for her touching faith with a caress that was more eloquent than words, and told her the story of his early sorrow—how he had married, blinded by a pretty face, and awakened from his brief dream of bliss to find that the beauty had not one attendant good quality, and to live a lonely, forsaken, dishonored man.

"What a life mine has been I cannot tell you," he said, with a sad smile. "The sting of that wound never ceased to rankle till I met you—not because of the love I bore my faithless wife, but because of my wounded pride, and the dread I had daily and hourly of standing face to face with her."

"Then she is not dead?"

Katherine drew herself away from his embrace involuntarily, there seemed a barrier between them now.

"Yes, my darling, she is. Only ten month since I was telling the dearest friend I have in the world, that I did not know where she was. Even then she was dying, and asking for me. I found a summons to a workhouse hospital-ward waiting for me when I got back to town."

"And you saw her?"

"Saw her die, and gave her what she craved—my forgiveness. Poor wretch! something of courage and honor clung to her to the last. She never betrayed who I was or what I was to her. 'A gentleman who had been very good to her,' was all she said—and in that character I buried her."

"Poor thing!"

Katherine saw the tears glittering in his eyes as he spoke, and her own lashes were wet.

"I am glad you knew the end," she said.

"Had I not, I could not have known this happiness," and he raised her hand to his lips. "She was my wife through all her sinful life. I never dragged her name or my own through the scandal of the Divorce Court. There was no need. I had had enough of matrimony, as I thought, for one man's life."

"Yet you are going to risk it again?"

"I am not going to risk anything," he answered. "Providence sent you to me to atone for that suffering. We will let the past be as though it had never been, and begin life anew together."

The rejoicing at the Limes was great over the new bond of union entered into between the two specially favorite guests. Mr. Compton behaved like a modern Diogenes no more, but came out with all sorts of presents and beautiful things for the bride-elect, and was as elate and rejoicing as though the affair had all been proposed, settled, and arranged by him.

There was no need for any delay; the bride had no fortune to settle and no relations to object, and the bridegroom was his own master.

So it was arranged that the marriage should be in May, regardless of the old Scotch proverb, dating from Queen Mary's luckless union with Darnley, which says—

"Marry in May,
Repent for aye;"

and they were to go abroad, that Katherine might see some of the grand old places of European history, and then come back to Holmdale, and settle down for the present to a country life.

Mr. Hastings wrote to Captain Haughton, telling him of what was coming to pass, but witholding his bride-elect's name till they should meet. On receipt of which intelligence the captain came post haste to town to see what manner of woman had captivated his friend.

"Look here, old fellow," he said, as they sat over their wine after dinner; "I believe there's some sell in all this."

"Not a bit, on my honor!"

"You hav'n't been trapped in any way, have you? Let in to marry a designing widow, or anything of that sort? It's all so deuced mysterious, I don't know what to make of it."

"My wife that is to be hasn't a farthing of money, and I met her for the first time in a publishing office; but she is a *lady*, and you're no judge if you don't think her a very charming one."

"Poor Hastings, he's been let in by some artful girl with a pretty face," was the captain's soliloquy, as they went their way to Katherine's lodgings; and his amazement was extreme when he was introduced to a graceful, elegant girl, in half-mourning, as "Miss Branscombe."

He bowed, but his amazement would not let him speak for a moment.

"Not Katherine, of whom I have heard so much?" he said. "I beg your pardon, Miss Branscombe—I don't know whether I am most astonished or delighted to meet you."

His hearty hand-clasp showed her that she had another friend, and from that hour he was her sworn champion and ally.

"And that mean hound could turn from her to that fair-haired doll!" was his mental exclamation, as he watched her graceful bearing, and listened to her lively, womanly conversation. "Well, it's a queer world, and beyond our kenning; but a better man has won the prize he threw away, that's one comfort."

May came, and brought the wedding-day. No brilliant ceremony, with a fantastically-arranged procession, and a pealing organ to play the "Wedding March," and whole troops of friends to admire, and yawn, and criticise; but a quiet little affair in the old church at Kew, with Mr. Compton and his household to play the part of father and friends, and Captain Haughton for best man.

Katherine, in her pale gray dress and white bonnet—for she could not give herself quite up to bridal finery, not having left off her mourning—looked very lovely, and felt more peaceably happy than she could have believed possible.

The old shoes were thrown with a will, and her last sight of the Limes was of a doorway making a frame for a group of happy faces, all straining their eyes after her to wish her joy. And on her way to Dover, she read in one of the papers her husband bought at the station—

"*On the 10th inst., at Roscobel Abbey, Herefordshire, the wife of Philip Reynell, Esq., lord of the manor, of a son and heir.*"

In another part of the paper was a paragraph, describing the festivities attendant on the auspicious event, now three days past. She looked up, and saw her husband watching her, with eager questioning in his face.

"I can read it without a regret *now*," she said.

"Without one pang?"

"Without one, believe me, Henry."

It was the first time she had called him by his Christian name, and he looked into her eyes and read his happiness in their loving truth. The pain of the past was gone, and the love he had craved for had come in its place.

It was autumn when they returned from their tour, and Mrs. Hastings found herself the queen of the little circle round Holmdale. Patroness of this, and lady visitor of that—solicited only for the favor of her presence at school treats and country merry-makings—she laughingly declared she felt quite a great woman. One of the earliest of the public appearances she was called upon to make was at a bazaar in aid of the funds of the county asylum. Charitable people, bent upon giving the poor inmates pleasure, had proposed buying them cricket, archery, and croquet apparatus, and to aid this laudable resolve, and amuse themselves at the same time, they got together pretty girls and pretty nothings, music, refreshment, and flirtation, and made a bazaar.

It was held in the grounds of the asylum, and part of the programme was walking over the place, and extolling the exquisite arrangements, flattering the smug doctor, and talking largely about what nine out of ten of the visitors knew no more of than a Hindoo.

Katherine, on her husband's arm, explored the whole place with interest, saying a kind word or two to the poor creatures lounging about with the terrible listlessness which is so marked a feature of their malady. As they passed a group in the grounds a man sprang forward, with a startled shout, and caught her dress.

"Miss Kate!" he said, imploringly; "oh, Miss Kate!"

The voice was familiar, and she looked at him wonderingly, while her husband drew her back and released her dress from the poor lunatic's grasp.

"Don't hurt him!" she said, as an attendant bade him, roughly, come away. "He is doing no harm—I'm not afraid of him."

But they pulled him away, shaking him and abusing him as they went, and still he struggled with them, calling, piteously—

"Oh, Miss Kate! make them let me speak to you—don't you know me? I'm not mad!"

And as they thrust him into the house, through the nearest door, Katherine sank on a seat, faint and breathless, for she recognized in him Philip Reynell's faithful servant, Edwards.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MURPHY'S MASTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE EMBARKATION.

"I'm here!" observed a dogged voice presently; not as a warning that there was a spectator of the fond pair's rapture (which indeed they already had in Mary), but as a hint that he had been overlooked.

"Oh, Jim, of course," said Robert, a little awkwardly, but shaking him all the more warmly by the hand, to make up for the neglect.

Jim was not improved in appearance since the old forest days. He had that slouching, defiant look which is acquired from habitual conflict with the law, and he looked dissatisfied besides. "This ain't much of a place," said he, "to come to, across the world, considering how you've cracked it up. There is not a tree as I can see, and where the game's to come from—"

"Oh, Jim! how *can* you," broke in Lizzy tearfully, "after what your mother said!" She was not easily moved to tears, as Robert knew, but he had perceived that she was in deep mourning, and guessed the cause, which had prevented him from asking after her mother.

"Oh, yes," continued Jim, "It's all very fine for you, who have your young man here, which is all you want. But what *I* want to know is, why we're here? Why didn't we stay in Melbourne, where we should have been right enough, and Robert have joined us there, instead of?—"

"I could not join you there," interposed Robert, gravely. "I wish I could have done so. It is a long, sad story. This place is all you think of it, James, and much, much worse—"

"Hush, hush!" interrupted Mary, warningly, and pointing to the door of the other room that made up the cottage, and in which the rest of the Beamish family were asleep. "Tell him all that another time—not here; it is not safe. Take them both over to your house to breakfast."

"You have sense in your head, young woman," observed Jim, approvingly.

"And kindness in her heart, I am sure," added Lizzy, gratefully. "She has been so kind to me, Robert!"

"Don't speak of that, miss," said Mary, "it was only fortunate that I happened to have been asked to stay with some friends at the harbor for a few days, and so chanced to be there last night when you arrived. I knew that my mother's roof, as it is, would give you welcome, and I also knew that Mr. Chesney here would have gone mad, if you had not come to New Town. Both Maguire and Murphy, sir," (turning to Robert,) "looked very black at me, but, thanks to you, I have my own way with everybody now."

And so it was. The Governor in no way molested her, but his craze of imagining her to be his consort, made her much "looked up to" by the colony in general: while after the lesson that Maguire had received, he scrupulously avoided her presence, though, without doubt, awaiting his own day of recompense.

A few hours put Robert in possession of all that happened to Lizzy since he sailed to seek what he now felt to be indeed his ill-starred fortune. Her mother had succumbed to the illness of which she had written to him while at Liverpool, and that loss to the orphaned girl had been more deplorable, since it rendered her more subject to the hateful solicitations of John Rowland. Her brother, indeed, remained to her, but it was easy to see, though Lizzy strove to disguise it, that he had not played the part of guardian as he should have done. Perhaps he was too much in Rowland's power to do so; perhaps he was not unwilling to become allied by marriage with one who could not only screen his offences, but offer him great opportunities for indulging in his favorite pursuit. At all events it was plain that poor Lizzy had been greatly persecuted. Love alone could scarcely have accounted for the rapture which she now evinced in having found a home, which, humble though it was, was subject to no intrusion, or for the happy confidence she shewed in Robert's protecting arm. He had not the heart to fully disclose to her how weak that arm really was; and indeed it would have been hard to convince his hearers, fresh from the well-ordered glades of Windsor, of the abnormal and anarchic condition of things on *Murphy's Island*, and of the perils from a mad despot in the one case, from a revengeful traitor in the other, in which they stood. What he told them then did but make Jim more than ever curse his fate in having quitted first England, and then Melbourne, for "this cussed island;" a very natural, but at the same time an ungenerous expression of feeling, whereat Robert winced; while, on the other hand, it made Lizzy nestle in his arms the closer, whose dear embrace filled him with trembling fears. When he bethought him now, that for his sake, and at his invitation, she had come to such a perilous spot, her very beauty sent a chill to his heart. She was more beautiful even than when he had seen her last, and as he had so often pictured her, while absent. She was no longer the tall and slender girl that had hung upon his neck in passionate farewell but six months ago, but a graceful woman. Her simple mourning dress became her admirably; the one black ribbon that confined her plentiful soft brown hair was, in his eyes at least, more attractive than a circlet of pearls; the small white collar about her shapely throat embellished it better than a diamond necklace, save that the latter would have less concealed its charms. *Her* pearls and diamonds were in her eyes, from which the happy tears would gather at his words of love and comfort, to be kissed away by his long stinted lips. And yet one of that reunited pair, at least, was well aware that it was no time for courtship and love passages; and how to escape from *Murphy's Island* was the one thought that occupied him whenever he dared to think. Notwithstanding that when she was out of his sight, he always trembled for Lizzy's safety, he did not omit once a day to put to sea as usual in his little boat, and coast round to the opposite side of the island, where alone he could hope to catch sight of some passing sail. He would have taken Lizzy with him, had he dared, but fraught with danger as his position was in any case, to have infringed Kavanagh's edict would, he felt, be at once to draw down on him—or, what was worse, on her—the pent-up vengeance of Maguire. That Kavanagh, if not won over by the latter, was at all events growing more and more unfavorable toward himself, was only too plain; not only was he still forbidden to approach the harbor, but the permission he had applied for, to give up his own residence to Lizzy and her brother, had been coldly—perhaps cynically—denied to him, as being derogatory to Robert's position as Lieutenant-governor. Under pretence of being his servant, however, Jim was allowed to have a lodging under his roof, a privilege only granted perhaps because it was known that it would not add to his own domestic comfort. James Alston indeed had shown himself little less than an enemy of Robert's. He spoke ill of him, or, at all events, in dissatisfied and grumbling terms, throughout the island; and was in consequence received into open favor with Murphy, and, as was whispered, by Maguire himself. Another, though less particular reason for his being "taken up with," by the former at least, was his love for drink, which, always manifest in him, had become on the island, where strong liquor was only too easily procurable, very pronounced indeed. He would come home from the harbor drunk, to the Lieutenant-governor's residence, and behave not only with disrespect, but in the most offensive manner, to Lizzy's inexpressible concern; at last, coming home one evening more intoxicated than usual, when his sister and Robert chanced to be taking a walk together, and finding the boat as usual drawn up upon the beach, he launched it, and paddled out to sea. Robert saw him from the shore, and hurried home, not daring to communicate to Lizzy the apprehensions that audacious act inspired within him; but the mischief had been done. Even if the fact of this contravention of the law could have been concealed through the good nature of those who witnessed it—which was more than doubtful, since Jim had rendered himself far from popular in New Town—the culprit would have thrown away that chance, for he boasted openly of the deed, affirming in one breath that he was an Englishman, who owed no obedience to Kavanagh or any other "Irish body," and in the next, that Murphy and Maguire were hand-in-glove with him, and would see he did not come to harm.

The next morning, he was seized under Chesney's roof, and carried off to the harbor, where the latter dared not follow him; the arrest itself might have been made, and very likely was so, with the very intention of thus getting the Lieutenant-governor into the net of despotic law; and though he would have run the risk had he himself only stood in peril, he dared not do so with Lizzy dependent on him. Moreover, he did not anticipate any very severe sentence upon Allston, from the fact of his connection with Murphy. Lizzy, however, was beyond measure alarmed and solicitous upon her brother's account, and at once hastened over with Mary Beamish to Government House. With Kavanagh she was sternly denied an interview; but Maguire coolly informed her that if her brother's life was spared it would be so, as Robert's had been, on the condition that he should make a disclosure of certain state secrets, and in the meantime, he was to remain in prison. To Lizzy this was inexplicable, but Robert understood but too well what it meant: James Alston was to be kept in confinement, with the fear of death hanging over him, until he should confess to some treasonable words spoken by the Lieutenant-governor; and indeed, when in company with his sister, he had heard Robert speak frankly enough, and needed no imagination to invent them. Whether he should have the baseness to betray them, was at present doubtful; but the one thing certain, whether as regarded the prisoner's fate or his own, was, that not a moment was to be lost in leaving the island. The state of affairs had become intolerable, and must be put an end to at all risks. He could now handle the little boat with ease, whether with sail or oar; and small as she was, had acquired great confidence in her. So long as the sea was tolerably smooth—and it was now fair weather—he felt that she would float well enough; though anything like a gale would without doubt sink her. He knew his course to Melbourne, and made up his mind to tempt the dangers of the deep, though it was but in a cockle-shell, rather than trust any longer to the caprice of a madman or the mercy of a villain. He had small hope indeed of reaching the mainland in such a craft; but it was not impossible, could he keep her above water, that he might fall in with some passing vessel; in that case, no matter what she was, nor whither she was bound, help for Lizzy would surely be obtained, for had he not about him the money wherewith to purchase it! At any moment he might be himself arrested, or the permission to enter the boat withdrawn from him, and even this last desperate plan be thereby entirely frustrated; so he set about his arrangements at once. His glass, his compass, and his map he disinterred from their hiding-place, and concealed them in the gig; he also stored an abundance of water and provision ready to place on board of it at the last moment. But he could not go—he had not the heart to do so—without acquainting Lizzy with his intention.

"It is a wild and desperate hazard, darling," said he, having set before her both the perils that he was about to flee from, and those which he must needs incur; "but it is the last chance left to me, and I must take it."

"Take it," cried she, "and may Heaven prosper it; but if you love me, Robert, grant me one thing: take *me* with you."

At this proposition, Chesney was greatly alarmed and distressed. He had expected arguments against his own departure, but this sympathetic compliance with it embarrassed him far more than opposition could have done. The idea was hopeless, preposterous. To dare the ocean in so frail a bark himself, he knew to be perilous in excess; but to permit one so delicate and precious to share that peril, was not to be thought of. And yet she pleaded hard, and not without some show of argument and good sense.

"I could say, Robert, that without you, and knowing the dangers to which you were exposed, life would be here intolerable to me; I could say that, left without your protection, I would rather die than trust myself to the tender mercies of such men as Maguire and Murphy, who would at once guess that you had taken flight, and take vengeance upon poor me, who would alone be within their power; but you have thought of these things yourself, I know, though you have been silent on them for my sake. Let me remind you rather of what you have forgotten; how useful my poor help may be to you. I know nothing of the sea, it is true, but on the river, remember, I have learned to manage both sail and tiller; the little boat will trim no worse, but the better for my weight, and even for the greater quantity of provisions that my presence may make necessary. If you perish, let me perish with you, which would be more merciful to me than to bid me live on; and if, through Heaven's mercy, we escape, let us escape together."

Such were, in brief, her arguments, which backed by tears and kisses, in the end prevailed on her lover to carry her with him. As Robert had access to the provision store, the preliminary arrangements were soon completed, and the very next evening was fixed upon for the adventure. It was necessary to delay till after dusk, in order that they should elude the pinnace, which, without doubt, would instantly be sent after them. But with eight hours or so of clear start, Robert hoped that he would elude pursuit; once out of sight of the island, he would be safe; not even Maguire was capable of shaping his course to Melbourne without the aid of a compass, and fortunately enough, there was none such on the island save that which Robert possessed. The date of the fugitive's escape was delayed by a curious circumstance. Robert, who had purposely avoided Lizzy's company for some hours, in order to avoid suspicion, was alone in his house, making a few final preparations, when suddenly a violent report shook the frail tenement, so that the glass fell from the windows, and everything on the shelves was thrown to the ground. The whole population of the village were in the street in an instant, to seek the explanation of the phenomenon, which they deemed as before to proceed from the explosion of some gigantic piece of ordnance; for the sky was without a cloud, and no indication of thunder was to be felt in the atmosphere, which was serene and cool. Lucy herself, accompanied by Mary Beamish, ran across to Robert's house, and, with joyful cries, averred that some ship of war was nearing the harbor. He met them at the door, with an excited but unjoyful face.

"The sentry is still on the hill-top," said he, "which shows that he has seen no ship. My belief is that it is"—before he could say "an earthquake," another shock took place, even more violent than before, and accompanied by a strange appearance in the sea; the waves were rising and roaring upon the shore like water that is about to boil.

"The boat, the boat!" cried he, and rushed down to the spot where it was beached, a little remote from the village, followed by the two young women. With their assistance he was able to drag it up far higher on the shore; but they were only just in time. The waves, gathering strength and volume every moment, swept over the very place where it had lain in a few minutes, and one even, the sixth and largest, caught themselves as they fled uphill before it; they escaped, however, with a thorough wetting, and the boat being laden, was too heavy to be dragged down by its recoil. After the sixth wave, the sea went back again to its usual limits, but continued greatly disturbed. The houses in New Town was all more or less damaged, and one or two swept away; though there were no lives lost, the people were in a state of great perplexity and alarm, which Robert in vain attempted to allay by assuring them that the earthquake was over. He could convince none except Lizzy and Mary, who had been greatly impressed by his sagacity in respect to the danger that menaced the boat; although he was solely indebted for his knowledge to a narrative he had somewhere read of the great earthquake at Lisbon, where the waves had risen and swallowed up the land. Now was the time, when men's minds were occupied with vague terrors, and disinclined to concern themselves with the affairs of others, for the fugitives to put their plan into execution; at nightfall, accordingly, by which hour the sea had resumed its former calm, Robert and Lizzy stole out to where they had left the boat, and proceeded to push it down the hill. As they were thus employed, a hand was laid upon Robert's arm, and his blood ran cold within him. To be served with a writ of *ne exeat regno* at such a momentous crisis would have gone nigh to kill him, and he expected no less than to see Maguire or Murphy, with help to back them, come to forbid his departure. To his immense relief, however, his eyes only met Mary's pretty face, with a sad sweet smile upon it.

"So you are going away—you two—without even a good-bye to me," sighed she.

"We are, dear Mary," answered Lizzy; "we did not tell you of our intention, only in order that you might be in ignorance when taxed with the knowledge of it by others. Besides, in a few weeks at farthest, with Heaven's aid, we hope to be back again with help for my poor brother and for all of you."

"I knew Mr. Chesney was going," said Mary softly. "I felt that the boat was heavier than it should be, when I helped to beach it to-day. "There are provisions in it," said I to myself, "under that tarpauling;" nor would he, I felt, have shown such anxiety about the safety of the gig, had he meant it to serve only as a fishing-boat. Yes; I knew *he* was going, and even guessed that it would be to-night; but I never dreamed of your accompanying him, Lizzy."

"Will you come also?" said Lizzy tenderly. "There is room, and there is food."

"No, dear, no," answered Mary. "The temptation is great, but the people here will have no friend but me when Mr. Chesney has gone, and I am of use to them in many ways; above all, I cannot leave my mother."

"In a fortnight's time, be sure we shall meet again, Mary," said Robert consolingly. "Not one instant shall be lost by me in procuring assistance for you all—for you above all, Mary," and he kissed her cheek, "to whom we both owe so much."

"You will do your best, as you always do for others," answered she gravely; "but something tells me that the help will come too late—that we are parting for ever. That is why I could not help coming here to say good-bye."

After a few more words of consolation from Robert, which the girl acknowledged in silence, with the same sad smile, and after the two young women had affectionately embraced, the boat was launched, Mary running into the waves, and pushing it off with her own hands. Robert watched her standing on the shore until her form faded away into the dusk; every stroke of his oars sounding in his ears like a muffled funeral bell. I think that Lizzy also knew that Mary loved him, and pitied her, not with the contemptuous pity that some who have won the wealth for which they toiled have for the poor, and that some women have for their unsuccessful rivals, but with true and genuine tenderness.

"Since it cannot now be seen from the island," said Robert, breaking the long silence, "we can put up the sail;" and he did so.

CHAPTER XX.

GONE UNDER.

They sailed all night, the sea being tolerably tranquil, in what Robert judged to be the right direction; but the clouds gathered heavily, and hid the stars, so that he could make use neither of them nor of the compass. Lizzy was very helpful to him in the management of the boat, and he allowed her to do more than was necessary, in order to distract her thoughts. As for sleep, anxiety forbade her even to close her eyes. At sunrise, which in these latitudes occurs at once, without the streaks of dawn that herald it at home, they looked anxiously about them, and beheld the island still lying at a great distance. The wind had unfortunately changed in the night, and their course with it. They lowered their sail at once, in hopes to have escaped observation, and Robert took to the oars, and pulled his best. But either the sail had already attracted the notice of those on land, or the gig itself was discernible by means of the telescope. Before half an hour had elapsed, their worst apprehensions were confirmed by seeing the pinnace leave the harbor, and, with a favorable breeze, bear directly down upon them. Robert once more put up the little sail, and rowed as before with all his might, while Lizzy steered; but it was evident that his exertions were useless.

"We are lost," he murmured, "and I have been her destruction." He felt sure that Kavanagh, urged by Maguire, would condemn Lizzy to death for disobeying his edict, probably without permitting him to speak in her defence; nay, if permitted, what would his words avail!

Lizzy awaited her fate in silence, keeping her loving eyes fixed on her companion's face; there were no tears in them now: English born and English bred, she was not one easily to give up hope, nor, indeed, was she so deeply impressed as Robert was with Kavanagh's despotic power. "He would surely never put her brother to death, though he might frighten him, far less herself, or Robert."

She was soon fated to be undeceived. The pinnace came up to them very rapidly, and on her deck they could perceive Murphy himself, with three of the most devoted of his adherents. The former levelled a revolver at Robert's head as she came alongside, and bade him and the "deserter" come on board. There was nothing for it but to obey. The unhappy fugitives were transferred to the pinnace, which immediately put about for the island—clumsily enough, for Murphy knew little of seamanship, and his men less—with the gig fastened by a rope in tow. Robert was bound hand and foot, and thrown into the bows. Only one sentence more was vouchsafed by Murphy.

"It is lucky for you, traitor," said he to his prisoner, "that Maguire was not in my place. He would have shot you down like a dog. There is now, however, twelve hours of life before you, since you will die at sunset. As for this girl, she will not be hung, since I have taken a fancy to her myself; and he looked toward Lizzy with sullen approval.

"Fool, idiot, that I was!" thought Robert, his helpless frame trembling with fury. He had had a pistol in his pocket, and might have settled accounts at least with this miscreant at the moment when he was overtaken, but he had forborne to do it, upon Lizzy's account, and lest the other men, who were also armed, might, in revenge, have killed her on the spot. Now, for her sake, he regretted that he had not done so. The poor girl was sitting in the stern, with her eyes fixed on the sea, and her face pale as death—the death which Robert knew that she was meditating. After Murphy's words she had made up her mind not to be carried ashore alive. Presently, the sea became extraordinarily agitated, and the vessel, guided as it was by such unskilful hands, began to be unmanageable.

"If you will lose my limbs," said Robert, "I will save the ship: otherwise, you will all four go to the bottom sooner than you expected."

The three men looked at Murphy, as much as to say—"There is something in that."

"The Governor's orders were, that he was to be bound hand and foot," mused Murphy; "but then, on the other hand, he was to be brought back; and if we sink, that can't be done." On the whole, he thought his master's orders—and he thought of nothing else—justified him in cutting Robert's bonds, and handing him the tiller—not, however, without this caution: "If you do not steer direct for the island, I will blow your brains out."

"I must steer as the sea will let me," answered Robert coolly. A grim calmness had settled down upon him; the thought that he could kill Murphy at any moment was a very considerable comfort; and whenever he looked toward Lizzy, he longed to do so. The sea still continued very rough, notwithstanding that there was scarcely any wind, and a cloudless sky. A wave would sometimes sweep the deck from end to end, and the blinding spray dashed over the bows like a fountain.

"You are not steering for the harbor!" roared Murphy presently, and fingering the butt of his revolver.

"The spray flies so high and thick that I cannot even see the island," was Robert's quiet reply. "Where is it?"

"Ay, where *was* it? It had been seen a minute ago about half a league to the south-west, and now it was not visible.

Murphy and his men looked out for it with eager eyes; Lizzy lifted up her head, and languidly looked about her, though the question had little interest for her, since she never meant to set foot upon the shore. Robert, who knew the very place where it ought to be, could see nothing, though his gaze was prolonged and fixed. This was the more extraordinary, for at this time the waves began sensibly to abate, and the spray with it. The sea, and nothing else, was to be beheld on all sides. Incredible as the fact seemed, there could be no doubt about it: *the island was gone.*

They sailed on in the direct course in which it ought to lie; but as though it had been a floating island, with power of rapid locomotion, it eluded them.

"There is some witchcraft in this," exclaimed Murphy, turning furiously toward Lizzy. "It is you who have done it, you fair-faced devil."

Robert took out his pistol, cocked it, and placed it on the seat behind him. One of the crew, however, stepped between the girl and Murphy.

"That is nonsense, Dick," said he. "There has been murder done enough already, and who knows but on that very account this thing has happened. Remember Pat Doolan!"

"But the young master!" ejaculated Murphy, with a groan of agony. "What *can* have become of him? Oh, sir"—here he burst into tears, and turned to Robert with outstretched hands and supplicant voice—"I have done you wrong, and meant you worse; but you loved the young master once yourself—I know it, for that was why I hated you; I pray you, then, for his sake, tell me what has happened! You know so much, while I—I only know that I have lost him!"

With that he grovelled on the deck, and would have clasped Robert's knees, had he permitted it.

"Are you sure, are you quite sure that this is where the island was?"

"I am quite sure of that," answered Robert, gravely; "and what has become of it, I think I can also tell you. I have no more experience of such matters than yourself, but I have read that islands are sometimes cast up in the sea, and there remain for many months and years, and then again are swallowed up with shocks as of an earthquake as quickly as they came; and such, as I believe, has been the fate of this one; at all events, it is beyond a doubt that underneath us now is the grave of all your friends, and some of mine."

Lizzy, notwithstanding the miracle, as it seemed, that had been wrought for her deliverance, was weeping bitterly for the fate of her ill-starred brother. Robert, too, hung his head, thinking of the self-sacrificing hands that had pushed his boat off but a few hours ago from what then was land, and were now tossing unlife-like beneath the wave with shingle and with shell. The men, too, were deeply affected, and gazed down into the blue depths, as though it were possible to descry within them the forms of their lost friends—wives, children, comrades. Perhaps, poor fellows, they were simple enough to suppose that the island might presently re-appear again, with nobody much the worse. Murphy still knelt in the boat, with his clasped hands before face—a piteous spectacle. No word was spoken for several minutes, passed in unutterable thoughts, till Robert again broke silence:

"There is no use in our remaining here, Murphy," said he, firmly; "I shall now steer for Melbourne."

"You will do as you please, sir," answered the other in broken tones, "and these men will obey you. The master said that if anything happened to him, you were to be his successor."

These words were spoken with a certain reverential humility, as though Chesney had actually become invested with a portion of that authority which, with Murphy, stood in the place of all others—human or Divine. All at once he sprang to his feet, and stood in the attitude of one who listens attentively.

"What do you hear?" asked Robert anxiously. It was just possible that another volcanic shock, such as had doubtless submerged the island, had given warning of its approach, though to his own ear nothing was apparent but the soft splash of the wave and the flutter of the sail, for the boat was almost stationary.

"I hear his voice," cried Murphy. "'Dick, Dick!' he says, soft and low, just as he used to whisper when I was down with the fever, and he was minding me. 'I'm coming, I'm coming, masther!'

And before any one could interfere, the faithful foolish fellow had placed his foot upon the gunwale, and with tight folded arms had leaped into the sea. He was a strong and active swimmer, as all well knew, but he never rose again. Robert would have given much to see him do so, for in that act of fidelity—dog-like or madman-like though it might be, but inexpressibly touching—all the wrongs done or intended to him or his were forgotten; but they watched for him in vain—Murphy had gone to join his master. After half an hour of fruitless waiting, the pinnace was put about, and sailed for Melbourne. They would have had to endure much privation on the way, even had they reached it at all, since the store of provisions in the gig was very insufficient for five persons; but on the second day they fell in with a vessel bound for England, which took them all on board. The terrible and unlooked-for destruction that had overwhelmed their friends—though at the same time it had preserved themselves—for some time overshadowed the lovers. For Mary, they both mourned; Lizzy bewailed her brother, for whose fate Robert could not be expected to feel poignant grief; while on the other hand Kavanagh's loss appeared far otherwise to him than to Lizzy, or than it had done to himself at the moment of their own deliverance. The acts of violence committed by the "young masther" from first to last, inclusive of his brother's murder, he honestly ascribed to madness, to which indeed they were doubtless due; how far that madness had been induced by passion and want of moral control, and finally by drink, was a question into which he dared not look. What he strove to remember now was only the drowned man's tenderness and trust. Lewis had perished without leaving any heirs, so that the bequest of the three thousand pounds—with the deduction of that large proportion of it which he did not forget to bestow on the three survivors from Murphy's Island, in accordance with Kavanagh's wishes—might fairly be considered to be his own. The first sum which he expended out of it on arriving in England went to the purchase of a marriage ring; and during the time which the cruelty of the law interposed between him and wedded bliss, he placed his Lizzy under the care of Mistress Mulvaney. To the former's surprise, and indeed not a little to her scandal, the widow welcomed him with a hearty embrace. "I never thought to see you again, my brave boy," cried she, "nor to hear anything of you, save that you had come to grief; far less such good news as this:" and here she kissed Lizzy. "You went away from my house, lad, in very indifferent company; as to one of them, I ask no question, for ever since what happened at Falston Hall I washed my hands of him. But how is that ne'er-do-well Dick?"

Robert's face told her before he could reply in words. The widow plumped down on the little sofa—it was in the old smoke-room that the interview took place—and burst into tears.

"Heaven forgive me for speaking ill of the dead!" cried she; "and he such a broth of a boy! But tell me all about it."

Robert did not tell her all, or perhaps she would once more have altered her opinions; but he told her what he could of good about him; and especially concerninghis end.

"I never thought Dick would overlive his master," was the widow's quiet comment when she had recovered herself. "Do you remember what you wrote about him to your pretty sweetheart here, comparing his fidelity to that of a dog? He got hold of that letter, and made me read it to him in this very room; and when I got to that part of it, the poor fellow only said: 'Well, that's true enough;' as though he was proud of it."

With his remaining two thousand pounds or so, Robert purchased a little business in the cabinet-making line, for which he had always had a taste; and being not only diligent himself, but having a diligent wife—which always doubles a poor man's gains—he soon became prosperous enough. The first article of any elaboration that he turned out with his own hands was a tea-caddy, which now forms the admiration of the patrons of Mulvaney's. The outside has succombed to the all-pervading influence of the place, but the inside—and this Mrs Mulvaney persists in ascribing to its excellent workmanship, rather than to its contents—has up to this time successfully resisted the flavor of onions. Robert has one son, named after himself. He would have called him "Frank," after his benefactor, but Lizzy opposed it. "Mr. Kavanagh was very good to us," pleaded she, "I own; but I do not wish my boy to remind me in any way, even in name, of a mur—— I mean, of Murphy's Master." In graceful return for this compliance, when a little girl arrived to make their home complete in its domestic furniture, her mother named her Mary. As for the other Mary—Mary Becher—so strangely and unwittingly mingled with their fortunes, nothing could be heard of her, though Robert did his best to find her out. He felt that the least they could do was to share with her, should she need it, the abundance with which they had been dowered by him she had known and loved as Wilson. It is probable, however, that he had amply provided for her before he quitted England.

The Chesneys lead a happy quiet life, and they desire no other. The love of adventure with which Robert was once possessed has been fully satisfied, and he is very reticent concerning his past experience. As a customer of his of some standing, and admitted in some sort to his familiarity, as being an amateur cabinet-maker who has a turning lathe of his own, I gained possession of the foregoing facts; but I should not have done so, had I not, in addition to those pretensions, happened to disclose the circumstance that I had been witness to a certain scene at a turnpike gate near Windsor Forest, on one stormy winter night, which was, as it turned out, the prologue to his own eventful history. I, too, although but for a few moments, had seen both Murphy and Murphy's master, and therefore seemed entitled to be told their story.

To assert its truth would seem to be to protest too much; but as a satisfaction to that considerable class of the community who "only believe what they read in the newspapers," I may add that its most singular feature—the sinking of a populated island—was recorded in the columns of the Times within the last three years.

THE END.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

PARTINGTONIAN PATCHWORK.—Humorous, Eccentric, Rhythmical. By B. P. SHILLABER. This is a new batch of papers and anecdotes by the far-famed "Mrs. Partington," and the book will no doubt find a ready sale among the lovers of humorous literature. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. Price $1.75.

THE WISHING-CAP PAPERS.—By LEIGH HUNT. Now first collected. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. Price $1.50.

THE JUBILEE SINGERS, and their Campaign for Twenty Thousand Dollars. By G. D. PIKE. With photographs by Black. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. Price $1.25

HIGH LIFE IN NEW YORK.—By JONATHAN SLICK, Esq., of Weathersfield, Connecticut. With illustrative engravings. Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philada. Price $1.75.

MISS LESLIE'S NEW COOK BOOK. A Complete Manual of Domestic Cookery in all its Branches. By Miss ELIZA LESLIE. Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philada. Price $1.75.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY for April contains "The Exploits of Edmond Genet in the United States," by James Parton; "The Wood Lake," by Paul H. Hayne; "Frederick Chopin," by Amanda B. Gere; "Thomas Clarkson and Nicholas of Russia," by Robert Dale Owen; New Literature, Art, Music, Politics, and a number of other fine papers, poems, etc. Published by James R. Osgood & Co., Boston.

SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY for April. Miss Proctor's profusely illustrated description of "Moscow and Southern Russia" will be read with peculiar interest. Among the illustrated papers we also notice an article on America's prima donna, Clara Louise Kellogg, with a portrait, which is decidedly better than magazine portraits as a rule. In the way of fine fiction is the beginning of a powerful story by Saxe Holm. Published by Scribner & Co., New York.

☞ "What is the difference between me and a new novel?" inquired a highly-rouged damsel of her beau. "It is this," said he—"a new novel is *read* because it is interesting, and you are interesting because you are *red*."

☞ Somebody has written a work entitled "Useful Hints for Ugly Girls," and the New York Commercial Advertiser declares that the book has the smallest circulation of any literary production in the United States.

☞ A Danbury young man out of employment and health, desires to act as substitute for some pensioner of the war of 1812. No objection to going to the country.

☞ A drunken fellow had wandered into a Sunday-school, and took a seat among the primer scholars, when the teacher accosted him with, "Why, James, do you know what condition you are in?" "Yes, m'm; in the gall of bit'ness, 'n the bonds 'f 'niquity. Ask me some hard quesh'ns."

☞ "Murder is a very serious thing, sir," said an Arkansas judge to a convicted prisoner. "It is next to stealing a horse or a mule, sir, and I shall send you to the State Prison for six years, sir."

☞ A Stonington man spent three-quarters of an hour, the other evening, trying to pick up a piece of moonshine from his doorstep, which he fondly fancied to be a newspaper. His afflicted wife finally came out, brought him to consciousness by the aid of a loose fence picket, and steadied his tottering steps into the house.

☞ The St. Louis Republican recommends an ambitious debating society in Kansas to take as its next subject, "Which is the butt end of a goat?"

☞ Buffalo's leading beggar is worth two hundred thousand dollars.

☞ A Vermont farmer sent to an Orphan Asylum for a boy that was smart, active, brave, tractable, prompt, industrious, clean, pious, intelligent, good-looking, reserved and modest. The Superintendent wrote back that unfortunately they had only human boys in that institution.

☞ A careless barber, trimming Sheridan's ears, put him to great pain and uneasiness. "Are you trimming my left ear now?" says the wit. "No, sir; not till I've done the right." "Oh! only I thought by what I felt that you were passing through to the left ear without going round."

☞ A Minnesota youth, who attempted to start his horse by hitting it with a gun, failed to make his steed go, but was more successful with the gun. That went off promptly, and took off three of his fingers with it.

☞ A peaceful disposition is not absolute protection against the turmoils of life. What's more peaceful than a clam? And yet, ten to one, it ends its life in a broil. And then, how peaceful an oyster is. And yet how frequently it gets mixed up in a stew.

☞ A Lunenburg man is advertising for a wife as follows:—"I Want two get me a good respectable yong Lady twenty Eight years old for me a Wife i Want one that can spin and Weave i Would like to get a farmers Daughter i Want a new hampshire girl for me a Wife one that likes to Do house Work i Would like a Wife soon. Apply soon two—"

☞ A celebrated singer, Madame Le Rochois, was giving a younger companion in art some instructions in the tragic character of Medea, which she was about to sustain. "Inspire yourself with the situation," said she; "fancy yourself in the poor woman's place. If you were deserted by a lover whom you adored, what would you do?" The reply was as unexpected as it was ingenious. "I should look out for another."

LUCY'S BOARDER.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, BY DAISY BURNS.

Lucy Marks was a pretty little maiden of seventeen summers, and taught the district school in A——. One bright morning just as school was closing, she stood at the door, tying on her hat, while several little flaxen heads were gathered around her. She was laughing merrily at some of their childish wit, when a voice accosted her.

"Good morning Miss., can you tell me where I can get boarding in some private family for about two weeks?"

She looked up, and there stood an elegantly dressed man, with a valise in his hand.

"Oh, dear!" she exclaimed, and no wonder she was startled, for a stranger was a rare sight in the quiet little village, and Lucy couldn't think when she had seen such a nice looking man.

"Excuse me for startling you, young lady, but—"

"Oh, yes," said Lucy, "you want boarding—well let me see"—and she began to think over the various chances.

"I don't care for expense," remarked the stranger; "will pay five, six or seven dollars per week. I dislike the bustle and confusion of a public house so much, that I will pay *any price* for boarding in some quiet, respectable family."

"Goodness," thought Lucy, "he's rich—now five dollars a week is a heap, in two weeks it would be ten, then I could buy that lovely hat from Mrs. Hays, and I do want it so much. Sue Jones has got almost the mate to it, and Tom walked to church with her Sunday, and if I had one he might—yes, I'll do it; of course it will be right with mother." From this we may infer Lucy was questioning herself, "could not she board him?" at last the supposition that handsome Tom might walk to church with her if she had that hat, was too much for her; she looked up in the stranger's face.

"If you had just as leave—I mean—I think you can board with us—my mother and I are alone"—she said.

"Thank you," replied the gentleman, "and if you are on your way home now, I'll accompany you," so they walked on together.

It must be known Mrs. Hays kept a milliner's establishment in the little village, and in one of her bandboxes was a lovely white hat with a delicate wreath of buds, in which was intermingled a few sprigs of lillies of the valley, and the price of this hat was even $10. Now Lucy longed to own that hat, not only because she admired it and knew it would become her, but she had heard Tom Wayne express great admiration for that same hat; Mrs. Hays having shown it to him. And be it known, Tom was number one in Lucy's affections, and ever since she had seen Tom walk in church with Sue Jones that Sunday, and she with a new hat, she had wondered and wondered how she could make $10 to purchase the hat, and now here was the very opportunity. Yes, they would board the stranger, then *she* might walk to church with Tom.

Lucy took her boarder into their best room, then went in to tell her mother what she had done.

"My dear Lucy," said her mother, "I'm surprised at you, it will never do—why you don't know anything about the man—"

"Oh, he's a real nice man, mother—wears a watch and—"

"Never mind what he wears—we know nothing of him, and—but I don't see what can be done."

"Oh, we *must* let him stay, mother," said Lucy, intent upon getting the hat.

After a time Mrs. Marks gave her consent, though unwillingly, and Lucy prepared the table for dinner with great care, putting on all the silver she could find, and her mother's best preserves and pickles. She then brought in the dinner, and invited the stranger in. He was from Cincinnati he told them. His name was John Hanson. He was buying some land near the village, and as there was a little difficulty about settling the title he was compelled to wait a few weeks.

After dinner was over, Lucy went up into her little bedroom, prepared it nicely, arranging fresh flower-pots, &c. Then she showed her boarder his room, after which she ran over to Mrs. Hays', told her what good luck had befallen her, and begged her to lay aside the hat for her. Mrs. Hays kissed the bright face, and promised to do so. Lucy then went on to her school, and proceeded with her usual duties.

For two weeks Lucy was up with the lark, and busy as a bee through the long day. The trouble her boarder caused—his ill-timed wants, carelessness about the house, which made double work were as nothing, for was she not to have that hat?

One evening Lucy came home from school, and her mother met her at the gate.

"Why, Lucy," she said, "I expected to see you wearing your new hat."

"My hat?"

"Yes, that's the way you intended investing your $10 for Mr. Hanson's board."

"Yes, but he hasn't paid us yet."

"Didn't he pay you when he told you good-bye? He told me he would settle with you."

"Why, has he gone?"

"Yes—surely he went by to see you?"

"No. I have not seen him."

"Well, I had no faith in him from the first—you'll just lose your hat, that's all."

"Oh, mother!" and Lucy began to cry.

"Don't cry," said Mrs. Marks, following Lucy into the house, "it can't be helped now; turn in, set the table, and let us have supper."

Lucy wiped her eyes, and began putting the dishes on the table.

"Why, mother, where's all the silver?" she exclaimed, searching for spoons and forks.

"Good gracious me—ain't they there?" said Mrs. Marks, running to the safe. "No—not one. Lucy we've been boarding a thief."

After supper Lucy went into her bedroom to put on her best clothes, for Tom Wayne was to call upon her that night, and she must fix up. She dressed herself very sweetly in a white dress and blue ribbons, then she went to her little jewel box to get the only set of pure gold jewels she had. She raised the lid and beheld it was empty. She told Tom of her misfortune when he came, and he endeavored to trace up the thief, but all in vain. Mrs. Marks' spoons, Lucy's jewels and John Hanson were heard of no more. Mrs. Hays, kind-hearted woman that she was, after hearing of Lucy's ill fortune, sent the long-wished-for hat as a present to Lucy, and the very next Sunday Tom walked to church with her, and they have been walking to church together ever since. But not alone, for Tom will take his little boy with him all the time, and he is the very image of Lucy.

☞ An Illinois bridegroom in the first flush of wedded bliss, made a magnificent gift to the Quincy Whig editor of a bottle of Whiskey and a yard and a half of bologna sausage.

☞ Some people find cause for lamentation in everything. The Rafteman's Journal, published at Clearfield, Penna., is disposed to become tearful, because many rattlesnakes having perished from cold during the winter the coming crop will probably be light.

☞ The "San Francisco Chronicle" says: "A young man entered a restaurant last night, being attracted by the sign, "Fresh boiled crabs, fifteen cents." He sat down, had a crab dished up, ate it, and threw down fifteen cents on the counter. The keeper demanded a quarter. "I thought that sign read fifteen cents," suggested the young man. "So it does. It's twenty-five cents when you take 'em here, and fifteen cents when you take 'em home." "Well," was the reply, "I am taking this home," and coolly walked out."

☞ A parent writes to us that he is annoyed and pained by his son staying out nights, and asked us if we can present a remedy for this rapidly-growing evil. There are several remedies. The boy's spine can be broken with an axe, or he can be nailed to the floor with a red-hot railroad spike, driven through his abdomen, but the most effectual way is to compel him to wear patched clothing.

☞ Rutland (Vt.) people have a new theme for gossip in the following: A girl of Quincy, Mass., escaped from the despotic restraint of home and eloped with her lover. At Rutland, she woke up on the third morning to find the man of her choice departed, with $450 and a large assortment of dry goods belonging to her. Moral—Virtue hath its reward.

☞ Revolutionary relics and veterans of 1812 are becoming scarce and rather stale as subjects for paragraphs, and the time has come when the oldest locomotive engineer is an object of interest. He died not long ago in Iowa, and now has expired again in New Hampshire, and we expect to hear of him dropping off all over the country at short intervals during the next ten years.

☞ The Hibernian cook who "strung" beans with a needle and thread, is looking for a situation.

☞ An Ohio courting couple fell asleep over a stove and burned to death.

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WIT AND HUMOR.

HOW TO CURE A COLD.

One of our citizens who had been troubled with a severe cold on the lungs, effected his recovery in the following simple manner: He boiled a little boneset and hoarhound together, and drank freely of the tea before going to bed. The next day he took five pills, put one kind of plaster on his breast, another under his arms, and still another on his back. Under advice from an experienced old lady he took all these off with an oyster-knife in the afternoon and slapped on a mustard paste instead. His mother put some onion drafts on his feet and gave him a lump of tar to swallow. Then he put some hot bricks to his feet, and went to bed. Next morning another lady came in with a bottle of goose oil, and gave him a dose of it in a quill, and an aunt arrived about the same time from Bethel with a bundle of sweet fern, which she made into a tea, and gave him every half hour until noon, when he took a big dose of salts.

After dinner his wife, who had seen a fine old lady of great experience in doctoring, on Franklin street, gave him two pills of her make, about the size of an English walnut and of a similar shape, and two tablespoonfuls of a home-made balsam to keep them down. Then he took a half pint of hot rum at the suggestion of an old sea captain in the next house, and steamed his legs with an alcohol bath. At this crisis two of the neighbors arrived, who saw at once that his blood was out of order, and gave him a half gallon of spearmint tea and a big dose of castor oil. Before going to bed he took eight of a new kind of pill, wrapped about his neck a flannel soaked in hot vinegar and salt, and had feathers burnt on a shovel in his room. He is now thoroughly cured and full of gratitude. We advise our readers to cut this out and keep it where it can be readily found when danger threatens.—*Danbury News.*

RUMFORD'S "BURGLAR ALARM."

Max Adeler says:—Rumford keeps a dry goods store, and dreading robbery, he procured a patent "burglar alarm," fastened it to the doors and windows, and attached it to a huge gong. All the policemen in that neighborhood were paid by Rumford, and instructed, whenever they heard the gong, to go for the burglars then and there, and to seize them at all hazards. For a while all went well enough. But the fifth night the wind blew savagely, and shook the store door so severely that it set off the alarm. When Rumford heard it, he seized a club, and, turning on the gas full head, dashed into the store for the purpose of macerating the ruffians whom he supposed were preying upon his property. Just then the police arrived, accompanied by a crowd of excited citizens. One detachment went around to the rear of the store; the others stayed in front. These looked through the hole in the door, and thought they saw the burglar in the act. They went for him. With a crowbar they smashed the door and the show window, and entered with drawn revolvers. This scared Rumford, and he dodged behind the counter. The policemen fired fifteen shots at him; and, the party in the rear effecting an entrance a moment afterward, twelve more shots were aimed at Rumford. Then the myrmidons of the law dashed up, caught him by the collar, laid him out on the floor, and hammered him up in a humorous manner for a few minutes with their clubs. When his bones were thoroughly mellowed, somebody discovered it was Rumford. It cost him six hundred dollars for plate glass and doors, two dollars for arnica, and the loss of the month's time spent in seclusion waiting for the bumps on his forehead to go down. Then he ripped out the burglar alarm, discontinued his acquaintance with the police, and bought a dog. Maybe there are worse disgusted men than he; but there are few persons who infuse so much energy, earnestness and whole-souled sincerity into their disgust.—*Phila Dispatch.*

FIFTEEN CENTS A DAY.

An economical correspondent writes to us to ask if Dio Lewis' plan for living upon fifteen cents a day is really practicable. We think it is. Dio's programme is: Oatmeal mush for breakfast, cracked wheat for dinner, and nothing for supper. A friend of ours, Brown, tried the experiment with brilliant success, and he is now as hearty and healthy a man as can be found. He would spread his board in the morning with mush, and, after the family had eaten eight cents' worth, Brown would prance them around to his aunt's or his sister's to fill up with a good meal. When dinner-time came, seven cents' worth of cracked wheat was disposed of, and then Brown would dig out a leg of mutton procured from a butcher, who had a weakness for giving credit. At supper-time, Brown would hustle the whole family off to his mother-in-law's, where they would lay away a substantial foundation for the next morning's mush. The Browns all considered the system particularly brilliant; but the mother-in-law and the aunt and the mutton-butcher, have less enthusiasm. They cherish a secret conviction that the mush theory, as applied to household economy, is a lopsided and demoralizing fraud.

AN ARISTOCRATIC ASYLUM.

An absurd mistake led on one occasion to the temporary confinement of the late Lord Chancellor of Ireland, in a madhouse. His lordship had received an unfavorable report of this particular asylum, and being anxious to judge for himself, he drove up in a close car, without having sent any intimation of his coming. When the porter refused him admittance, he said at last, "I am the Lord Chancellor."

"Oh, Lord Chancellor, eh?" said the porter, with a grin, as he opened the gate. "Step in; it's all right. We have seven of you here already. One got loose last week with the Emperor of China, but I thought both of you were back."

By this time his lordship was within the gate, and a batch of warders, summoned by the porter, took him in charge. It was not till he had sent for his secretary that he obtained release.

THE fourth wife of a man in the eastern part of Milton, Mass., was (as is usual for ladies after marriage,) regulating the fixtures in general about the house, and went into the attic, accompanied by a boy of some six or seven summers, where she saw a pair of neatly made saw-horses, such as carpenters use in cutting lumber. She said: "Sammy, my son, what are these horses for?" "Well, father keeps them horses to put his wives' coffins on." Imagine that span of horses taking a Sam Patch leap from the attic window of a two-story house with, "I guess my coffin won't ride you this week."

THE indictment against Miss Susan B. Anthony, for voting, charges that "She was a person of the female sex contrary to the laws of the United States, in such cases made and provided." This may have a tendency to discourage persons being born females, contrary to the laws of the United States. Persons of the female sex should always read the Constitution before being born, and then such mistakes would not occur.

☞ Look out for Mrs. ——, of Cleveland; she has killed two husbands, and is roaming around the country after a third.

WOMAN.

The following lines by Moore are, the Athenæum says, now published for the first time:—

When life looks lone and dreary,
What light can dispel the gloom?
When Time's swift wing is weary,
What charm can refresh his plume?
'Tis woman, whose sweetness beameth
On all that we feel or see,
And if man of Heaven e'er dreameth,
'Tis when he thinks purely of thee,
Oh! woman!

FOOLED.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

The afternoon sunlight fell through the artistically-hung curtains, making Miss Ada Marvin's private parlor, which was furnished in green, oak and gold, seem like a small sea of light and color. The windows were open, and the soft spring air coming in through the groups of purple and white hyacinths, scented the room deliciously.

Miss Ada herself, in a flutter of blue and white ruffles and ribbons, turned suddenly on her music-stool, knocking down half-a-dozen books and a vase of flowers, and rushed into the arms of a friend who was just entering. Then followed a succession of sharp reports resembling the sound of suppressed pistol-shots. The affectionate young ladies—having been separated a whole day—were devouring each other with kisses. This operation concluded, they set to work to examine each other's dress with lynx-eyed attention—the scrutiny being covered by a rapid fire of small-talk.

"Oh, Annette," said Ada, "I expect to have quite a crush here next Tuesday night. I sent out three hundred invitations, and received only two 'regrets'—so I've no reason to complain."

"I'm sure it will be *perfectly* splendid," said Annette, clasping her daintily-gloved hands, and rolling her eyes ecstatically in the direction of Cosmo Marvin, who was reading near a window. Cosmo Marvin was a bachelor, rather handsome, wealthy, but over thirty.

"Too old a bird to be caught with chaff," Annette Symmons thought, and in consequence, she tried to drop her pretty airs and affectation.

Cosmo came forward, bowed gravely to Miss Symmons, and made a remark on the weather. Miss Symmons feared that her friend's brother was intellectual, and growing apprehensive lest he might ask her opinion on the latest scientific work, she rushed at once into music. *Such* a lovely new song by Claribel—and did he like Beethoven?

He liked "Adelaide"—and his eyes grew thoughtful as he said it—a friend of his used to sing it.

Miss Symmons pronounced it sweet. He should hear Miss Ogden, their church-organist, play some of Beethoven's compositions. Had he ever heard her?

Often. Here Ada frowned, and pinched her friend's arm, but not before Annette had asked whether Ellen Ogden had been invited for Tuesday night.

"No;" Ada answered, severely. "She's only a school-teacher—and one must draw the line somewhere."

"I suppose, then," said her brother, "anybody having no visible means of support, is on the right side of your line.

"Now, Cosmo!" returned Ada, flushing up. "You ought to be reasonable. People of our class *can't* know everybody."

"Certainly not. I doubt if any sensible person would wish to know the people composing our American aristocracy. Do you remember Saxe's lines—

"Depend upon it, my snobbish friend,
Your family thread you can't ascend
Without good reason to apprehend
You may find it waxed at the farther end,
By some plebeian vocation;
Or, worse than that, your boasted line
May end in a loop of stronger twine,
That plagued some worthy relation!"

Having finished his quotation, Cosmo bowed to the ladies, and left the room.

"He's an unmitigated bear!" cried the offended Ada. "But, Annette, your allusion to Ellen Ogden was really unfortunate. She's an old flame of his. She tried very hard to catch him once, but mamma and I didn't approve of her. She's not *de notre classe*, you know. We couldn't entertain the idea of having a mere school-teacher in the family, so we snubbed her and sneered at her whenever we got an opportunity. Well, Cosmo popped the question, and Ellen Ogden had the assurance to refuse him—saying she would never enter this house while we occupied it. The house is Cosmo's, you know, but he couldn't turn us out; so he and Ellen quarrelled, as she persisted in her refusal on the plea that she could not endure insults from her husband's relations. The idea of such pride in a school-mistress! Cosmo and she often meet, but they are decidedly cool in their manner to each other."

"Indeed!" And then the dear creatures began the delightful task of picking the unfortunate Miss Ogden to pieces.

"Do you know that next Tuesday is the first of April, Ada?"

"Is it really? And the night of my social, too. Why, Annette, we can introduce some novelties."

"We'll find out some way of enjoying ourselves immensely at other people's expense. I had *such* fun last April-fool's day," pursued Annette, gushingly, and with an air of infantine gayety. "I never laughed so much in my life! I sent an anonymous letter to Annie Vere, making my writing look as much like a man's as possible, and appointing a meeting-place. She was to know me by my huge blonde whiskers and moustache, and by a blue ribbon on my coat. Well, she just copied the letter, altered the address, and sent it back to me. I thought I'd have died!"

"I've an idea, Annette. Suppose we make Ellen Ogden look ridiculous. I would really like to lower her in Cosmo's estimation. I'm afraid that he may again ask her to marry him, and the second time she may say yes, for people of her class are never insensible to the distinction of being connected with a good family—to say nothing of wealth. I intend to try to bring her unexpectedly here next Tuesday evening, dressed in her ordinary way. When Cosmo sees her beside you or some other elegantly-dressed lady, he'll change his mind about her perfections. I'll make an April fool of her—and him."

"But how will you manage it? Your brother very rarely comes down when you have a party."

"I'll explain all that in good time. Isn't that Mrs. Elton, who came from Eastville, staying with the Veres? She's Ellen Ogden's aunt, you know."

"Yes. But Miss Ogden and she appear to be only on speaking-terms."

"I've sent Mrs. Elton an invitation already. Now for my plan!"

And the two talked in low tones, mingled with frequent bursts of laughter, which, although it sounded very sweet and girlish, was certainly not free from malice.

On the following Tuesday evening Cosmo Marvin took refuge in his study up-stairs. The high notes of the violins and the sound of the dancing made their way even to his retreat at the top of the house. He sat down to a small cabinet organ, and tried the Adelaide, thinking of the fair, refined face of her who had last sung it for him.

The door suddenly opened, and Ada, attired in soft, cloudy blue, with her golden hair wreathed with hyacinths glided in.

"Farewell, dearest, never, never can we be united until a more economical mode of living prevails."

Cosmo turned, looking at her in undisguised admiration. Ada saw it, and felt triumphant. "What will he think of Ellen Ogden when her compares her to me or to Annette?"

"I am as greatly astonished as gratified by this unexpected pleasure!" he began. "How could you tear yourself away from your dear 'three hundred,' who are trying to be 'social' in the lower regions?"

"Oh, Cosmo—it's a case of—life and death!" She had run all the way up the stairs in order to appear breathless. "You must come down immediately."

"And why? Explain yourself."

"Mrs. Elton has been suddenly taken ill. She wants her niece. All the waiters are engaged, and all the gentlemen are in evening costume. Of course they can't go, and you must. I've had a carriage called. Come!"

"Who is Mrs. Elton's niece? And where do you want me to go?"

"To the boarding-house, corner of Elm and Vermont streets. Hurry!—*do* hurry, Cosmo."

He put on his hat and overcoat, and followed her down stairs. He knew right well the house of which his sister spoke, for Ellen Ogden lived there.

"For whom shall I ask?" he demanded.

"Haven't I told you? For Mrs. Elton's niece, of course. Don't lose time!" Ada responded impatiently.

She saw him enter the carriage, and then, laughing as she went, ran to inform Annette of the success of her plan.

Cosmo drove to the boarding-house. He rang the bell, and told the servant that Mrs. Elton's niece was wanted immediately.

"Tell her not to lose a moment. Her aunt has been suddenly taken ill at Mrs. Marvin's house."

In a short time Ellen Ogden, in a plain black dress, and with a cloak and hood hastily thrown on, came down. Cosmo turned inquiringly to the servant. "I asked for Mrs. Elton's niece. There is a mistake."

"This is the lady," returned the servant.

Ellen coldly returned his salutation, and allowed him to assist her into the carriage.

"Is my aunt very sick?" she asked.

"I presume so—from what Ada said."

There was silence. Cosmo was nerving himself to speak some words that had lain in his mind ever since, in his anger, he had last parted from Ellen Ogden. Here was an opportunity that might never occur again.

"Ellen," he said, "can you forgive the harsh words I spoke when we parted?"

"They were forgiven as soon as spoken," she answered, trying to keep her tone unalterably cold.

"And repented. I have lost all interest in my occupations here. I intend to go to Brazil; I have received an offer to engineer a mine there. I will accept it, unless—he paused and looked at her. She averted her face—unless you alter your determination, Ellen."

"How can you expect me to enter a family, the members of which would regard me as an interloper? You told me I did not love you because I would not make this sacrifice. You were wrong. It is because I love you that I will not make it. With your mother and sister, we should both be unhappy."

"I know it now," he said, sadly, "although I did not understand your scruples before. My mother never opposes my wishes, but when I am not present, she is unfortunately ruled by Ada. But, Ellen, there is a cottage down at Roselands. It is mine; why should we not live there?"

Ellen said nothing. A bright color overspread her averted face.

"Will you be my wife?" he asked, eagerly.

The carriage drew up before the door. And Ellen said "yes."

Ellen took his arm, and they both entered the brilliantly lighted hall. The music was just giving the grand crash of a finale as they went in. Ada met them, an ill-suppressed smile playing around her lips. Annette joined her, gorgeous in pale gold-colored satin and opals.

"Two birds of Paradise and a crow," thought Miss Symmons, looking at Ellen. Cosmo did not see the contrast. There was a new feeling of happiness in his heart.

"Where is Mrs. Elton?" he asked.

"In the supper-room," answered Ada, as a number of the guests came toward them, having formed the last set; and then wishing to give the company the benefit of the joke, she exclaimed with a malicious glance at Ellen, "April Fool!" Then there followed a duet of laughter.

Cosmo saw through their silly plot at once. He could afford to be good-humored.

"Ada, my dear, allow me to present to you and Miss Symmons, my wife that-is-to-be, Miss Ellen Ogden."

Miss Symmons looked guilty and confused. Ada gave her voluminous train an angry swing, turned her back on the pair, and walked away.

"Well!" said Ada, endeavoring to soak up her flowing tears with an impalpable lace handkerchief as Annette entered the dressing-room—

"Well, *mon amie*—to put it as delicately as possible—we have been *fooled*. I knew how it would be."

"Why didn't you say so, then?" demanded Ada crossly.

"Because you wouldn't have minded my words."

"I would!"

"You wouldn't!"

There's no use in further transcribing the dialogue. It ended in a quarrel that separated these affectionate creatures for several weeks.

Cosmo and Ellen Ogden are very happy in their cottage at Roselands. Miss Ada sometimes condescends to visit them. Time and experience are by degrees undermining her very aristocratic ideas of society.

PLOTTING MAMMAS.

It may be taken for granted that it is the desire of most loving mammas to see their daughters married. But, at the same time, it is indisputable that many anxious mothers would rather their daughters remained single for a number of years than contract an unsatisfactory matrimonial alliance. Thus, the fond parent is placed in rather a difficult position, and has a double task to perform. On the one hand, she has to look out for eligible young men, and, on the other, to guard her unsuspecting children against penniless adventurers. In her eyes, a poverty-stricken youth is, necessarily, the enemy of all maidens whose fathers live at the rate of some thousands per annum. She may have married a man who when he commenced life could with little difficulty have put all the money he possessed in his pocket; but that is no reason why her darling child should do anything so silly. Love in a cottage may be all very well in its way; and, perhaps, at one time she considered it the height of human bliss. But age brings experience and knowledge, and what in the hey-day of youth appears pure gold is in middle-age discovered to be tawdry tinsel. Besides, though her husband has turned out trumps, it by no means follows that if she confided her daughter to a man occupying a similar position to that in which her partner commenced life, he will ever rise above it. So she prefers, like the prudent soul that she is, to be upon the safe side. Thus she fixes her attention upon men who have already made a name and position, and prepares her traps for both him and her daughter to fall into. One great difficulty invariably besets her path. Really eligible *partis* are frequently pretty well up in years, and most girls have an objection to wedding men who are much older than themselves. To remove this objection is not always an easy matter, for sometimes even the most obedient daughters have wills of their own. Thus, though they will not go to the extent of marrying in defiance of their parents' opposition, neither will they encourage the advances of men of whom their hearts do not approve.

☞ The Advance believes so firmly in the predictions of the weather prophet at Washington, that it wants him christened "Old Certainties."

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces payment of the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

T. S. wishes to know of M. W. B., the full address of the colleges of Eureka and Abington.

ANXIETY, (Massachusetts,) writes: "Some time ago, I saw in your correspondents' column a discussion concerning the proper finger on which to wear an engagement-ring. This interested me very much, as it's a subject upon which I am quite anxious. But that about which I desire your advice is, the most desirable method of reaching the climax which would produce *the* ring. I would prefer a handsome solitaire. Please give most approved receipt. 2d. Supposing a goose set on six of her own eggs, and four hen's eggs; at the end of three weeks hatching out the chickens, while her own eggs are yet still. Now which do you think the goose would be most justified in doing—proving a good step-mother by deserting her own natural family and carring for her chicks? or vice versa? It is near setting-time and I would like to know how to counsel my poultry on this tender subject. 3d. Don't you think I write pretty well for a girl of forty?" We think that our anxious friend is slightly inclined to be sarcastic. She should be charitable, and not imagine that because she is wise on all points and confident in her own judgment, no one else can possibly need advice. The questions on points of love and etiquette are doubtless of vital importance to many of our correspondents, however trifling they may appear to those who are not in the same predicament, or who are self-confident enough not to desire advice. Such counsel as we can offer to young ladies and gentlemen in love, we are always willing to give. As for your questions—1st. Set your cap for some solitaire gentleman of your acquaintance. The ring may perhaps follow in due time. 2d. We prefer to leave that question for the goose tribe to settle. If you wish to take it out of their hands, we shall not object. 3d. Not very.

THE STREAM OF TIME.—We are informed by a friend, that the author of the quotation about The Stream of Time, inquired about a few weeks ago, is Mr. B. F. Taylor, of Chicago.

S. B. C., (Fowlersville, Pa.,) writes: "I will trouble you with a few questions, as I put great confidence in your abilities. 1st. Where or what became of the Jew that Christ doomed to wander the earth until his return? 2d. On what condition was the Alabama Claims settled between the United States and England? 3d. What per cent. is my handwriting?" 1st. He turns up every few years, according to the accounts of superstitious people. In reality the whole story is simply a Middle Age legend, without probably the slightest foundation in fact. 2d. They were settled on the condition that England should pay a round sum to the United States, to be paid by our government to the claimants. The award amounted to fifteen and a half millions of dollars. 3d. About 50.

LITERARY, (Grumboro, N. C.,) asks: "1st. Is ——— published now? If so, at what price? 2d. Can you furnish me with Edna Browning, written by Mrs. Holmes, and at what price? 3d. How long has the Post been published? 4th. How is gunpowder manufactured? 5th. What do you think of my writing? Will it do for a copyist, or bookkeeper?" 1st. It is still published, at $1.50 per year. 2d. Yes. Price $1.50. 3d. It is now in its 33d year. 4th. It is an intimate mixture of nitre, charcoal, and sulphur. The proportions used vary in different countries. In America they are 75 parts nitre, 12½ charcoal and 12½ sulphur. 5th. It is poor, and would not answer for the purposes mentioned.

L. L., (Ashland, Ky.,) writes: "I see in the Post of the 1st of March an answer in the affirmative to a question whether the mother of Christ had any other children, and taking for a proof the 6th chapter of Mark, 3d verse. I find in St. John, 19th chapter, 25th verse, that the mother of Christ had a sister called Mary wife of Cleophas; and by turning to St. Matthew, 27th chapter, 56th verse, I find it is that Mary who is the mother of James and Joses, and of the sons of Zebedee. Will you please tell me in your next issue whether I understand the Testament wrong?" If you examine the citations from St. John and St. Matthew closely, you will find that the one speaks of a party near the cross, and the other "afar off." There is no positive reason to suppose therefore that they were the same parties. Mary Magdalene might have been in both groups at different times. The mother of Zebedee's children we should take to be a distinct person, and not the Mary preceding. Besides, there may have been another James and Joses than the persons mentioned in St. Mark. The latter statement is certainly very decided.

ANXIETY, (Parker City, Pa.,) writes: "I have been reading the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, and am anxious to know something of their origin. Who was the author &c? I have also been told that the work is large, and has been condensed into small proportions. Is this correct?" The work in question is a collection of the fairy lore of the Saracens, made during the period of the supremacy of the Saracen empire, after this remarkable people had turned their attention from conquest to literature. Their vivid imagination and peculiar turn of thought are well displayed in these tales, which modern Europeans have in vain sought to imitate. There is nothing known as to the author of any of them. There are many editions, of different degrees of completeness. The best is that edited by Lane, the English Orientalist, published in New York in 1856.

S. A. L., (New Hope, Md.,) writes: "You can tell the person who asked what U. N. T. meant, that it means Our New Thread. And will you be so kind as to answer the following in the correspondents' column of the Post? 1st. Is there a paper published at Cape May? If there is, what is its name? Who is the editor, and what is the subscription price? 2d. Do you know of anything to prevent hair splitting at the ends and falling off? Do you think it would do it any good to cut it off? Would sleeping in a cap help it any? I had a very heavy suit of hair, but for the last two years it has been breaking off and coming out. Never having worn any but my own hair. I am particularly averse to doing so now, and would be very glad to know of something to cure it. What would be the proper answers for the following? 3d. Give some proof that the earth is round. 4th. What is the cause of a woolen dress emitting sparks when it is shaken, or stroked with the hand in cold weather?" 1st. There is a paper published there during the pleasure season, called, we believe, the Ocean Wave. For further particulars concerning it you had better address the editor. 2d. You should try clipping off the ends of your hair. This may prove efficacious. 3d. The fact that a vessel's mast-appear before her hull is an evident proof. That the sun rises to the north of east and sets to the north of west in summer, and that the pole star becomes more elevated as we go north, are other proofs. 4th. It is an electric phenomenon. It succeeds best in cold weather from the absence of dampness, as any dampness in the dress conducts away the electricity.

C. P. writes: 1st. How can I gain a sweetheart? If there are any young ladies among your subscribers that would like a lover I'm the one for them. I'm very fond of ladies. 2d. Don't you think it wrong for a lady to flirt with a fellow? I say it's mean, after a man makes a fool of himself, then she refuses to be his wife. No one has ever flirted with me though. 3d. What does free love mean? 4th. Do you pay anything for enigmas? I used to be good at making them." 1st. By making love to some lady. Our lady subscribers are doubtless all provided, being ladies of unusual attractiveness. You will have to go elsewhere for your sweetheart. 2d. If a man makes a fool of himself, how can he expect a lady to engage herself to him? You write like a sufferer. 3d. It seems to mean a variety of things with a variety of people. The two words themselves are innocent enough, but in the common acceptation of the phrase they mean something which people generally consider very objectionable. 4th. No. That department of our paper is a voluntary contribution from ingenious friends.

CONSTANT READER, (Milton, Conn.,) writes: "Please inform me where and at what price I can procure a catalogue of the students of Mount Holyoke Seminary, Mass.? Also one of Vassar College, Philadelphia? And one of a young lady's seminary in New Jersey, called St. Mary's Hall? Who was the author of a novel entitled 'Louie's Last Term?' Where can it be obtained and at what price?" You can obtain the information desired by addressing the principals of the various colleges mentioned. Vassar College is not in Philadelphia, but is situated at Poughkeepsie, N. Y. The work mentioned was written by Miriam Coles. We can procure it for you probably for $1.50.

M. H., (Kanaka, Ill.,) says: "In your paper of March 1st, among the advertisements of new publications, is a work entitled Homœopathy, the Science of Therapeutics. The price is not given. Can you let me know the price, as I wish to purchase such a work?" It can be had by writing to the author, Dr. Thomas Moore, of Germantown, Pa. It is simply a pamphlet, being his address at the annual meeting of the State Society of that medical school.

A SCHOOLBOY, (Brandy, Va.,) writes: "Can you explain to me the system of Spencerian penmanship? Is there a published work on the subject, by which one can teach himself? Or is it necessary to take instruction from a teacher of that system? Taking this letter as a specimen of my writing, could I hope to learn to write sufficiently well to make a living by the use of my pen?" You can obtain copy books, containing printed copies in the Spencerian style, with instructions, from any stationer. You could probably teach yourself with the aid of these copies. Your writing needs improvement, but you have the foundation of a good hand.

W. B. N., (New Madison, O.,) asks: "1st. Is algebra used by business men? 2d. Which is the largest publishing company in the United States? 3d. What is the difference between nett weight and gross weight?" 1st. No. 2d. We do not know. 3d. Gross weight includes the weight of packages, &c. Nett weight is simply the weight after all necessary deductions are made.

A. E. B., (Holden, Iowa,) writes: "You will oblige a true friend and constant reader of the Post by answering the following questions: 1st. How near has any one ever been to the North pole and got back without freezing? 2d. And have they written any history of the discoveries made in that region? If so, what will be the cost of the book; and where can I get it? 3d. What is meant by Credit Mobilier? 4th. How is my writing for a boy fourteen years of age? 5th. My friend wishes me to ask you a few questions. Is it proper for the bridegroom to kiss the bride before any one else does after the ceremony? I have known the like to be done, and don't think it looks well." 1st. The nearest approach has been about five hundred miles. 2d. There are numerous works of the kind mentioned. The expeditions of Dr. Kane and of Dr. Hayes reached the most northern point of any American explorations. Accounts of their discoveries have been published. 3d. It is the name of a joint-stock company, which built the Union Pacific Railroad. 4th. Not remarkable. 5th. We do not know that any one has a better right. The bridegroom, however, is apt to be bashful, and thus allow some one else to step in and take the first kiss.

(Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.)

RECEIPTS.

ENGLISH PLUM PUDDING.—Roll three-quarters of a pound of soda crackers, and mix them in two quarts of milk. When they have soaked soft, put in a quarter of a pound of melted butter, the same quantity of loaf-sugar rolled, two gills of flour, measured after sifting, one wine-glass of wine, and one-third of a nutmeg. Beat ten eggs as lightly as possible, and stir them in the mixture. Beat the whole well; then rub in flour, half a pound of seeded raisins cut once, the same quantity of Zante currants washed and dried, and half as much chopped citron; and mix the fruit well in the pudding. Bake or boil two hours. Serve with brandy or wine sauce. It can be eaten hot or cold.

FRIED EGGS.—While frying, they ought never to be turned. Break carefully in a cup one egg at a time (without breaking the yolks,) for fear some may not be quite fresh. If the yolks are mingled with the whites, they will not fry nicely. When sufficient are broken to fry at one time, remove the boiling fat from the fire, pour in each egg by itself so that they may not form a mass; scatter over the yolks of each a pinch of fine salt and a dust of pepper, throw the white belonging to each egg over the yolk with a tablespoon, and as soon as it is nearly congealed, remove the egg to the platter; if it cooks too slowly, dip over the egg some of the hot fat.

TO FRY EGGS HARD.—Proceed as above, leaving the spider on the fire; dip the hot fat over each egg until sufficiently cooked.

TO POACH EGGS.—Have in the spider water instead of fat; the water should barely cover the eggs. Remove the spider from the fire before putting in the eggs, and remove it as soon as the whites are congealed. Lay on each egg a small bit of sweet butter, and dust on a trifle of pepper; if desired hard, let them remain longer in the water.

RADISHES FOR THE AGED.—Peel tender radishes, grate them, add salt and vinegar, if desired. This manner of preparing radishes is more healthy for all; especially for persons who have poor teeth, and children who do not take time to masticate their food. Winter radishes grate nicely, and will be found a fine relish, when fresh salads cannot be obtained.

CELERY FOR THE AGED.—Take the blanched celery, cut it as fine as possible, add salt, and send it to the table, where vinegar and egg can be added, if desired. This salad should be served as soon as prepared, as it will be apt to turn brown; ornament the dish with green celery leaves. Onions can be prepared in the same manner, and will make a fine salad for those who relish them.

MADISON CAKE.—One pound of fresh butter and one pound of pulverised sugar, rubbed together and beat light; add a tablespoonful of grated nutmeg and a tablespoonful of ground cinnamon; separate and beat until light fourteen eggs; mix in the yolks, and beat them well with the sugar. Pulverize a teaspoonful of soda, and sift it with a pound and three-fourths of flour; seed two pounds of raisins, cut them once, dredge them with flour, and stir them in the cake; and lastly, stir in a pint of rich sour milk. Bake immediately in a moderate oven, and ice when partly cold. If more fruit is desired, mix in the same quantity of washed Zante currants.

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

MYTHOLOGICAL ENIGMA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 88 letters.
My 1, 2, 8, 26, 25, 45, 8, 13, was a hero famous for his exploits.
My 5, 27, 7, 24, 4, 82, was the goddess who presided over justice.
My 9, 11, 25, 55, 13, were gods who had hoofs and horns.
My 11, 24, 58, 72, 4, 22, 55, was a son of Jupiter by Antiope.
My 13, 31, 47, 34, 55, 25, 16, was a god of the woods.
My 16, 45, 5, 59, 37, 58, was one of the terrestrial gods.
My 17, 11, 63, 2, 13, were female deities who had charge of the destinies of mankind.
My 18, 25, 12, 22, 29, 86, was the goddess of morning.
My 19, 42, 8, 24, 76, 55, 25, 13, was the god of boundaries and limits.
My 21, 30, 2, 13, 3, 25, 13, was the hero confined in the Cretan Labyrinth.
My 22, 6, 58, 66, 2, 25, 13, was a divine musician.
My 24, 11, 8, 13, was the god who presided over war.
My 24, 25, 39, 3, 43, were terrestrial goddesses.
My 26 81, 75, was the animal in whose form Io was loved by Jupiter.
My 32, 87, 2, 3, 58, was the brother of Death.
My 33, 2, 11, 65, 6, was the daughter of Nox and Erebus.
My 40, 2, 23, 88, 70, 35, was the god of the winds.
My 44, 28, 24, 25, 32, was the god of jesting.
My 45, 79, 61, 13, 85, 18, 36, 25, 16, was the god who first made olive oil.
My 46, 2, 68, 14, 3, was a river in hell.
My 48, 22, 23, 33, 13, was presided over by the god Pan.
My 51, 11, 38, 2, 8, was the abode of the mermaids.
My 58, 83, 58, 57, 24, 77, 2, was the "king of the waters."
My 58, 41, 51, 11, 58, 25, 13, was the god who presided over gardens.
My 58, 54, 25, 60, 64, was the king of the infernal regions.
My 58, 11, 53, 67, 13, was the goddess of shepherds and pastures.
My 58, 8, 69, 13, 2, 8, 58, 84, 55, 3, was the queen of the infernal regions.
My 58, 50, 24, 56, 55, 11, was the goddess who presided over orchards.
My 58, 2, 55, 11, 73, 3, 13, were subordinate deities.
My 58, 80, 25, 62, 70, 13, was the god of riches.
My 58, 8, 78, 24, 2, 5, 49, 3, 25, 13, was a hero who stole fire from heaven.
My 71, 12, 13, 5, 74, 8, was one of twin-brothers, hatched from an egg.
My 77, 10, 24, 20, 13, 15, 32, was the goddess of vengeance.
My whole is a poetical extract.

Fort Totten, D. T. GAHMEW.

DECAPITATIONS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

1st. Behead a cape in North Carolina and leave an adjective, signifying empty, hollow.

2d. Behead a cape on the coast of Florida and leave an adjective, signifying to have the power.

3d. Behead a river in Louisiana and leave a boy's nickname.

4th. Behead a river in Turkey and leave a girl's name.

5th. Behead a city in France and leave composure.

6th. Behead a city in Delaware and leave across.

7th. Behead a river in Mississipi and leave a nobleman's title.

8th. Behead a river in Idaho and leave a bird.

9th. Behead an island on the coast of Asia and leave a domestic animal.

10th. Behead a cape in British America and leave a kind of playing card.

E. H. HARDING.

Penoyd Farm, Pa.

WORD SQUARES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A serpent of South America.
It occurs in nature in borax.
Originally a celebrated hunter in the oldest Greek mythology.
An animal.
To write.

Fort Totten, D. T. NELOM.

PUZZLE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of five parts, head, body, two legs and tail. Cut off my head, and you have a well known element; cut off my head and body, and you have a verb expressing a very common action; cut off my head, body and left leg, and you have a simple preposition; cut off my head, right leg and tail, and you have a personal pronoun of the masculine gender; cut off my body, right leg and tail, and you have a personal pronoun of the first person, plural number; cut off my left leg, and you have a word which may be used in eight different ways; cut of my body and right leg, and you have an adjective expressing a soaked state; cut off my head and left leg, and you have a very useful article. Turn me over and cut off head and body, and you have the name of a beverage. My whole is the name of a grain.

BERTHA.

WORD SQUARES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

An island.
Employment.
A bird's bill.
Requests.

TWAMEY.

ANSWERS TO LAST

ENIGMA.—Lord Bulwer Lytton, of Knebworth Park.

BIRDS IN THE CLOUDS.—1. Ames. 2. Petrel. 3. Turkey. 4. Emu. 5. Pye. 6. Nun. 7. Nias. 8. Paro. 9 Pinch. 10. Manakin. 11. Nandu. 12. Noddy. 13. Quail. 14. Raven. 15. Snipe. 16. Spink. 17. Stint. 18 Swan. 19. Teal.

WORD SQUARES—

I.	II.
KING	LAPE
IDEA	AREA
NEST	TEAR
GATE	EARL

ARITHMETICAL PROBLEM.—20½ bushels.